

Hafa Adai!

300 students join MTEC Tourism Summit. **PAGE 2**

Portion of Garapan road will be temporarily closed. **PAGE 3**

\$1

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Reminders on ARPA terms were ignored—Villagomez

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Virginia C. Villagomez, the newly appointed special assistant for the Office of Management and Budget, disclosed last week that, in the previous Torres administration in which she also served as OMB special assistant, she would remind the Department of Finance secretary about the terms and conditions of the American Rescue Plan Act whenever she finds deviations, but she was ignored.

Speaking at a press conference presided by Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang last Wednesday, Villagomez said that

See ARPA on Page 4

Muña: Decision to write off promissory notes 'was only fair'

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muña says the decision to write off promissory notes that were executed before CHCC took over the Medical Referral Services program is only fair.

Citing contradicting facts about the matter, and because the promissory notes were executed before CHCC took over the Medical Referral program, it's only fair that they be written off, she said.

"The promissory notes were executed right before we took over. There was also some data that was contradicting. We have one report

See CHCC on Page 4

\$1.65M Compact Impact grant for NMI confirmed

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, left, and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, right, flank U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor after a meeting yesterday to discuss the CNMI's economic challenges, need for technical assistance, funding opportunities, and other matters.



In a meeting yesterday with Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, Carmen G. Cantor, Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, confirmed \$1.65 million in Compact Impact grant funding for the CNMI.

"Pursuant to Public Law 108-188 and calculated based on the corrected 2018 Estimates of Compact of Free Association Migrants conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is allotted \$1,652,879 in Compact Im-

pact mandatory funding..." said Cantor in a letter she personally handed to Palacios.

"I am pleased to award \$1,652,879 for a general operations offset for the reimbursement of costs associated with providing

See COMPACT on Page 4

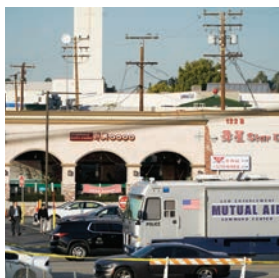
INSIDE



BUSINESS

Triple J Enterprises, Inc. partners with Butler Manufacturing on pre-engineered metal buildings.

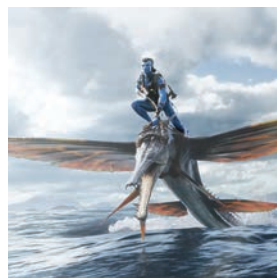
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NATION

The gunman who killed 10 people during Lunar New Year celebrations kills himself.

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LIFE & STYLE

"Avatar: The Way of Water" led ticket sales in theaters for the sixth straight weekend.

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Local

300 students join MTEC Tourism Summit

More than 300 students and advisors of school tourism clubs joined the Marianas Tourism Education Council's Tourism Summit last Jan. 19 at Kensington Hotel Saipan for a day of learning focused on the Marianas' primary economic driver, tourism.

Members of the schools' MY WAVE (Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusi-

astically) Clubs in grades 3-12 convened for the day's event, co-organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority.

The theme of this year's summit was, "We're Back with Respect! Our People, Our Land, Our Guests," reflecting the resumption of the Marianas tourism industry and the value of respect among the people of the Marianas, which includes respect for natural resources and visitors.

Guest speaker Dr. Bobby Cruz, who is the State Education Agency director for Public School System Mental Health, issued a call to the young lead-

ers, titled "Tourism: Bringing the Magic Back," challenging them to become aware of and help promote the unique qualities of the Marianas, including its indigenous cultures, the warmth of the community, and its peaceful, natural beauty.

Kuen-Hee Han, managing director of 500 Sails, introduced students to the goal of the organization to revive the indigenous maritime traditions of the Marianas.

Gordon Marciano, managing director and part-owner of tour company Pacific Development Inc., tied into the summit's theme by encouraging

students to connect with visitors and to maintain a positive attitude while extending island hospitality.

"We asked the students for two things—to listen carefully to the guest speakers and have fun learning about our tourism industry," said MTEC acting chairwoman Vicky Benavente.

Clubs also presented on their accomplished activities and upcoming plans. Participating schools were Tinian Jr./Sr. High School, Garapan Elementary, Kagman Elementary, San Vicente Elementary, Koblerville Elementary, Oleai Elementary, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary, William S. Reyes Elementary, Francisco M. Sablan Middle

School, Admiral Gilbert Hopwood Middle School, Tanapag Middle School, Da'ok Academy, Chacha Oceanview Middle School, Marianas High School, Saipan Southern High, Kagman High, and Dandan Middle School.

The summit also featured educational exhibits by the MVA, Northern Marianas Technical Institute, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, Northern Marianas College, Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History & Culture, CNMI Public School System, 500 Sails, Coastal Resources Management, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, and Mariana Islands Nature Alliance.

MTEC's outreach activities

this school year are supported by the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands and the MVA.

The event was also attended by House Speaker Edmund Villagomez, CNMI PSS Commissioner Alfred Ada, MVA Acting managing director Judy C. Torres, Northern Marianas College president and MTEC board member Dr. Galvin Guerrero.

Other MTEC board members are Martin Duenas (Marianas Visitors Authority), Larry Lee, Naomi Nishimura (CNMI Public School System), Gordon Marciano (PDI), Catherine Perry (Integrity Communications), and Glenn Policare (Kanoa Resort). (MTEC)

2 Saipan students named to Berea College Dean's List

BEREA, KY—More than 460 Berea College students were named to the Fall 2022 Dean's List, including two from the CNMI. They are Eun Jun Wang and Ha Young Seo, both from Saipan.

A student on the Dean's List is one who achieves a GPA of 3.4 or higher while passing at least four total credits, a course load equivalent to 16 semester hours.

Berea, the first interracial and coeducational college in the South, focuses on learning, labor, and service. (PR)

Acting CCC board chairman Demapan calls for monthly meeting

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rafael S. Demapan, who is currently the acting board chairman of the Commonwealth Casino Commission, scheduled yesterday their regularly monthly meeting this Thursday at 10:30am in the CCC's conference room at the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai.

Access to the meeting via

videoconference will not be available, however, Demapan said, because of the termination of all CCC staff and internet services at their office.

Among the topics on the agenda is the order of U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona mandating video mediation with Circuit Mediator Steven Saltial that is scheduled for Feb. 14, 2023, at 8am.

The board is then expected

to go into an executive session—essentially a closed-door meeting—where CCC board members will reportedly consult with their legal counsel on the status of ongoing litigations and arbitration involving the commission and the Saipan casino licensee, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC. The commissioners are also expected to discuss personnel matters in the executive session.

The CCC office was temporarily closed starting last Thursday due to lack of funds.

The commission has five commissioners, including Demapan. The contracts of nine remaining employees expired last Dec. 31, 2022 but they continued to report for work until last Wednesday while awaiting the new administration's assistance and guidance, a CCC employee said last week.

Last Thursday, Gov. Arnold

I. Palacios asked all members of board and commissions who were politically appointed by the previous Torres administration to resign to pave the way for the appointment of new board and commission members.

Palacios said he and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang are dedicated "to making fresh and meaningful changes that will help to rebuild trust and confidence and guide the CNMI into a brighter future."



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Portion of Garapan road will be temporarily closed

The construction phase of the sewer replacement project on Royal Palm Avenue and Ginger Avenue within the hotel district of Garapan will soon start, which means a portion of the road will be closed for more than two months during work hours.

A Commonwealth Utilities

Corp. news release yesterday stated that its contractor, RNV Construction, has received approval from the Department of Public Safety and Department of Public Works to initiate road restrictions in the area.

It will be necessary for RNV to close both Royal Palm Avenue and Ginger Avenue from

Palm Street to Micro Beach Road in order to complete the project. Roads will be closed during working hours only from Jan. 26, 2023 to March 31, 2023. Residents and businesses on these streets will be provided with detailed directions by RNV regarding as to when and how to access

their property. Detour signs will be displayed to inform the traveling public of the restrictions.

CUC customers in the area may be asked by RNV to limit water use while individual sewer services are replaced, but will not experience any disruption to their power, water or wastewater services as a result of the work.

This project is part of the

Sewer Main Replacement Phase II funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to provide a more reliable sewer system in the area. The transition work is in part of the decommissioning of the old sewer line and will replace with PVC pipe.

“CUC encourages the public to avoid these areas during construction and appreciates your cooperation in accommodating

the traffic restrictions necessary to complete this critical infrastructure improvement project for our customers,” the CUC statement said.

For more information, contact the CUC Hotline (236-4333) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/Comrnnon-wealthUtilitiesCorporation>). (*Saipan Tribune*)

SCC celebrates success, winners of its BPOY Gala

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce shares the success of its Annual Business Person of the Year Gala that happened last Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023, at the Hibiscus Hall of the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan. The night was filled with laughter, fun, delicious food, and good vibes. The emcees for the event were Marcia Nishimura-Calvo and Brad Ruszala. Entertainment was provided by SoundHire and The High Tide Band.

During the event, SCC celebrated and recognized the installation of the 2023 board of directors installed and signed to oath by Judge Kenneth I. Govendo. This year's board of directors are: Joseph Guerrero, president (Naked Fish Bar &

Grill); Dr. Joshua Wise, vice president (PHI Pharmacy); Janice Tenorio, treasurer (IT&E CNMI); Donna Krum, secretary (Friends First Marketing); Alex Sablan, director (Tan Holdings); Velma Palacios, director (IT&E CNMI); Nicole Babauta, director (Docomo Pacific); Ron Smith, director (Angil Design, Inc.); and John Arroyo, director (Bank of Saipan).

In addition, the announcement of this year's BPOY award winner was presented to John Jay Santos of Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods and Triple J Payless Superfresh & Truckload Store.

The other awardees of the night were the Kagman Isla Community Health Center,

which was awarded the 2022 Non-Profit of the Year Award; Bistro Boyz, which was awarded the 2022 Start-Up of the Year Award; Paradise Dental Spa, which was awarded the 2022 Small Business of the Year Award; and the Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations, which was awarded the 2022 Chamber Member of the Year Award.

The sponsors for the event were:

■ Gold sponsors: The ERC Group, Docomo Pacific, and United Airlines.

■ Silver sponsor: Tan Siu Lin Foundation and Marianas Pacific Distributors, Inc. (MARPA).

■ Event sponsor: Burger Comer & Associates, LLC, McDonald's of Guam and Saipan, Assurance Brokers Inc. (Saipan), Micronesian Resort, Inc., and Bridge Capital, LLC.

■ In-kind sponsor: Atkins Kroll Saipan, Calvo's Insurance, Angil Design Inc., 360 Enterprises, Island Training Solutions, Triple J Saipan, Inc., Hyatt Regency Saipan, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Godfather's Bar, World Resort Saipan, Pacific Health, Inc. dba PHI Pharmacy, IT&E CNMI, Naked Fish Bar & Grill, Pacific Trading Co., Turnkey Solutions,

D&Q International Distributors, Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia), Inc., 500 Sails, LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort, Western Sales Trading Co., and First Hawaiian Bank.

“The Chamber shares its greatest thanks to everyone who came to the BPOY Gala last Saturday, January 21, 2023, at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan. The gala would not have been possible without the help of the Chamber executive director's

office team, SCC board of directors, SCC Events Committee chair Marcia Nishimura-Calvo, SCC Events Committee, the SCC Membership, the Crowne Plaza Resort Team, most especially director of Banquet and Events, Mr. Das Krishnan, and the gala sponsors for the event,” said the SCC in a news release yesterday.

The BPOY gala serves as the SCC's largest annual fundraiser for Chamber programming.

Activities such as the Scholarship program, online seminars, workforce development training, small business support, and more to benefit its membership and local community.

In addition, the event honors past Business Person of the Year recipients, current nominees, and the SCC board of directors. Additionally, the event celebrates the installation of the 2023 board of directors. (*PR*)

Free webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free webinars on federal contracting this February.

Webinars are held every Wednesday (unless otherwise noted) from 10am to 11:30am via Zoom.

Zoom links are emailed to all registered attendees 30 minutes before the webinar.

■ **Jan. 25, 2023 – SBIR/STTR Programs** – These programs encourage inventors and innovators to engage in Federal Research and Development that has the potential for commercialization. The Guam PTAC will explain the programs and show how you can get started.

■ **Thursday Feb. 2, 2023 – SAM Registrations** – Vendors need an active SAM registration to participate in Federal contracting. The Guam PTAC will take you through the new Entity Validation process, the actual SAM registration, and follow-up requirements. We will also discuss the new annual renewal process.

■ **Feb. 8, 2023 – Federal Contract Opportunities** – SAM.gov is the portal for Federal Contract Opportunities. The Guam PTAC will show you how to use the website to ensure you do not miss any opportunities. Opportunity types, search filters, and search strategies will be discussed.

■ **Feb. 15, 2023 – PIEW/ WAWF** – Department of Defense vendors use the Wide-Area Workflow module in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment system to create,

submit, and track their invoices. The Guam PTAC will show you how to setup an account and submit an invoice so you get paid on time.

■ **Feb. 22, 2023 – Gov-Guam Procurement** – The Guam PTAC will explain Government of Guam Procurement, where to find opportunities, and how to submit bids.

To register, visit <https://www.guamptac.com/news-and-events.php>



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on Tuesday, June 15, 2021, Vincent Palacios Sablan, an immediate family member of Congressman John Paul Palacios Sablan, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.


Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low-income persons intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Congressman John Paul Palacios Sablan is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under applicable conflict regulations.

Any comments should be submitted to NMHC on or before Wednesday, January 25, 2023. Written comments may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net.


Dated this 10th of January, 2023.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director



COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



INVITATION FOR BIDS

CUC-IFB-23-011

LOWER MIHA SEWER LINE REPLACEMENT

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Lower Miha Sewer Line Replacement in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists of but not limited to the installation of gravity sewer main, new sewer manholes, new service laterals, connection to existing service laterals, and the abandonment of existing sewerline, removal and disposal of existing sewer manholes.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and CUC. The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the project to be completed in **365 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on January 24, 2023 at 10:00 AM (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **“CUC-IFB-23-011, Lower Miha Sewer Line Replacement”** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 7, 2023**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 27, 2023** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org, with a copy to Larry Manacop, Acting Chief Engineer for Water/Wastewater via email at larry.manacop@cucgov.org, Dennis Formalejo, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email at dennis.formalejo@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie L. Sablan Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician via email address at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Man accused of kissing girl, 13, to be tried on sex abuse charges

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has found probable cause to try a man on sexual abuse charges for allegedly kissing a 13-year-old girl last December.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho

has found probable cause to try Carlo D. Enriquez on the charges of sexual abuse of a minor in the third degree, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

The court determined probable cause existed after hearing a testimony from police detective Timmy S.

Pangelinan.

After the hearing, Camacho ordered Enriquez to return to court to be arraigned on Jan. 30, at 9am before Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja.

Enriquez, 53, allegedly kissed and inappropriately touched the girl last Dec. 23, 2022.

According to court documents, probable cause was found to charge Enriquez after a forensic interview was conducted with the victim back in December by a Division of Youth Services-Child Protective Services personnel.

The victim allegedly told DYS personnel that she went

to her friend and neighbor's house on Dec. 23 between 12pm and 3pm to "hang out" and bake brownies.

She said she was in her friend's bedroom playing a videogame when her friend left the room to use the restroom. While her friend was away, the victim said Enriquez entered the room and she immediately felt uncomfortable.

She said Enriquez touched her inappropriately and kissed her shoulders, above her upper lip, and chest. She added that at that moment

she was unable to move or speak. The victim said Enriquez also attempted to take off the face mask she was wearing prior to kissing her.

In a separate interview with the victim's friend, police said she initially told investigators that she did not know what had happened to the victim. However, the girl later said that, although she did not see anything, the victim did tell her that Enriquez had touched the victim inappropriately and kissed her while her friend was in the restroom.

DPS still on the hunt for Ye Fang

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety remains on the hunt for Ye Fang alias "Batu," who has been wanted for several months now.

DPS issued another announcement lately seeking the community's help in locating "Batu" who has

been on the run since November 2022.

Anyone with information on the whereabouts of "Batu" is encouraged to contact the DPS Criminal Investigations Unit at (670) 664-9064 or 911.

For those who wish to remain anonymous, you may call the CNMI Crime Stoppers Hotline at (670)234-7272.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, DPS has been on the lookout for "Batu" for months. He has even been the subject of previous social media posts that insinuated a public community threat.

Back in December, the month-old mugshots of wanted fugitive Ye Fang went viral in the CNMI community, along with videos of

firearms and other graphic, violent videos. According to the captions of these posts, Batu, who remains at large, was allegedly threatening the community with a shoot-out.

However, after investigating the viral posts, DPS spokesperson Adrian Pangelinan said the videos were not directed at the CNMI community and that they were shot over two years ago.

According to Pangelinan, the video was taken by a Chinese female two years ago. DPS has chosen to withhold the name of the woman to protect her privacy.

DPS was able to speak with the woman via a translator and she assured officers that the video was not meant to threaten the community; instead, it was a threat to Batu who she claims had threatened her and her family.

In addition, DPS said that, upon further investigation, the guns shown on the videos have all been accounted for and are legally registered with DPS.

Pangelinan also touched on the messages that circulated in the internet warning members of the community not to go to a handful of Chinese-owned stores as they were allegedly on Batu's hit-list.

WANTED



Ye Fang (a.k.a. "Batu")

ARPA

From page 1

when she was the OMB special assistant during the previous administration, it was the beginning of the infusion of ARPA funds, when their office would be informed of allotments with respect to ARPA allocations pursuant to the CNMI ARPA plan.

She said whenever there were any deviations, she would immediately call the Department of Finance, the Office of the Secretary, to remind them that there are terms and conditions in the use of ARPA funds that the CNMI must follow. The Finance secretary at the time was David DLG Atalig.

"The response was there was no response at all," Villagomez said.

As for the working group that Palacios had formed to review the CNMI government's finances, Villagomez said that, from a budget perspective, they will proceed with the revised budget based a determination of what remains of ARPA.

"At that point, we will identify the cost-containment measures that we will implement, and then wait for the Department of Finance to report to the governor of any revised projections on the budget," she said.

In December 2021, citing only "the interest of the Commonwealth, then-governor Ralph DLG Torres terminated the services of Villagomez as then-special assistant for OMB.

At the same news briefing last week, acting Finance secretary Tracy B. Norita said

the outcome of their working group will eventually lead to the 2023 budget revision. She pointed out that the Department of Finance is currently implementing a new financial management system, which has led to some certain findings.

"One of the things that we uncovered was the budgetary controls that were supposed to be turned off for essential expenditures. Because when you transition from an old system to a new system, government operations don't stop. And so in order for us to continue providing essential services, we can't have the system stop us from putting fuel into ambulances, or paying our police officers and things like that," Norita said.

"And so that was the highlight of the issue in the transition report," said Norita, who

is the director of Revenue and Taxation from the previous administration and until now.

Norita said this transition report and the findings are really coming out of the Finance secretary's office.

"And so that's where were starting and that's how we're going to move forward, to really start with the secretary's office and all the decisions and authorizations that were made at that level," she added.

Norita said she would not say that the CNMI's fiscal condition was hidden from her; it's just there were items that were not made available to them.

"Only certain people, I would say, were aware of the true nature of our fiscal condition. Each director has their own division and their own operations as their sole responsibility," she said.

COMPACT

From page 1

education, health, and safety-related services to [Freely Associated States] citizens," Cantor's letter added.

In addition to the announcement of the Compact Impact funding, they discussed different topics such as the CNMI's economic challenges, need for technical assistance, funding opportunities, and other matters.

"The U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs will be playing a pivotal role in the economic recovery and growth of the CNMI," said Palacios. "The meeting with Assistant Secretary Cantor was very productive and spurred other future collabo-

rative discussions that focused on expanding assistance to the Commonwealth."

The federal government is mandated to offset the costs that other territories and states spend arising from the U.S. government's Compact of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and Republic of the Marshall Islands. That Compact agreement has resulted in many citizens of those countries migrating and working in U.S. territories and states. The Compact Impact payments attempts to offset the costs for health, education, social services, among other services, that territories and states spend in order to host these citizens. (PR/Saipan Tribune)

CHCC

From page 1

saying this is how much is owed, and another report saying another figure. So, I think it's only fair that the decision to write them off was just fair—fair for the patients and fair for the program to move forward," she said.

In addition to this, Muña also stated a write off was fair as the Office of the Attorney General found that the program should not be executing promissory notes to begin with.

Earlier this month, Muña disclosed to the CNMI Senate that an audit conducted by the Office of the Public Auditor in 2021 showed that the outstanding balance of the promissory notes entered by the Medical Referral Services Office beginning in 1997 with MRSO beneficiaries was estimated to be \$11 million as of May 3, 2021, but that based on records pulled from the JD Edwards software system by CHCC in December 2022, the total outstanding was only about \$6.4 million.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Muña previously expressed concern about

inaccurate promissory note records in a letter dated Dec. 14, 2022, to former Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian).

Muña said that, according to available records, the program began entering into promissory agreements with MRSO beneficiaries who either hit the lifetime limit on medical coverage through the program; cannot afford their co-pay, or do not have insurance and do not qualify for the indigent program.

The CEO said that in June 2021, the Office of the Attorney General determined that the MRSO lacks the legal authority to enter such promissory arrangements. She said OPA recommended in its audit published in September 2021 that the MRSO should cease issuing promissory notes immediately.

Since the administration of the program transitioned from the Office of the Governor to CHCC in October 2021, no new promissory notes have been issued, Muña said.

She said CHCC does not intend to collect on outstanding promissory notes issued as the MRSO lacked the authority to issue promissory notes in the first place as determined by the OAG.

UOG to host online training in dementia care in Feb.

The University of Guam’s Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program is offering online sessions in February related to caregiving for people with dementia.

CARES Dementia Advanced Care – Module 4: Minimizing Falls

In the first week of February, two sessions will focus on “Minimizing Falls,” one of six modules under the CARES Dementia Advanced Care training program. These sessions will be held:

- 6pm to 8pm on Wednesday, Feb. 1
- 10am to noon on Saturday, Feb. 4

‘Remember Me When....’ with Dr.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Power service interruption on Wednesday

There will be a power service interruption on Jan. 25, 2023, as the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. continues its ongoing system maintenance.

- Time: 9am to 12pm
- Area(s) affected: Nguus Drive in Chalan Kiya. See attached map.

■ Purpose: To perform line clearing (16-spans) of vegetation near the primary lines along Nguus Drive in Chalan Kiya.

- Water well(s) affected: None
- Wastewater facility affected: None

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates <https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>. (PR)

Evelyn Flores

In the second week of February, Dr. Evelyn Flores will present “Remember Me When...: Reminiscence and Identity for Persons with Dementia.” Flores is a professor of Pacific Island Literatures and CHamoru Studies at the University of Guam. Her presentation will be held:

- 6pm to 8pm Wednesday, Feb. 8

CARES Dementia Care for Families – Module 1: Understanding Memory Loss

In the third week of February, two sessions will focus on “Understanding Memory Loss,” the first module of the CARES Dementia Care for Families training and certification program. These sessions will be held:

- 6pm to 8pm Wednesday, Feb. 15
- 10am to noon, Saturday, Feb. 18

CARES Dementia Care for Families is an award-winning program developed specifically for those caring for a loved one living at home. It has four modules: (1) Understanding Memory Loss; (2) Living with Dementia; (3) Using the CARES Approach; and (4) Keys to Success with CARES. Module 1 will be presented in the third week of February. Modules 2, 3 and 4 will be conducted in March and April. Participants who complete the

four modules will receive a certificate of completion and will be eligible for CARES Dementia Certification.

Sharing caregiver stories and finding support

In the fourth week of February, one session will provide new group members with an opportunity to share their experiences as family caregivers and to receive support and guidance from other members of the group who have had similar experiences. This session will be held:

- 10am to noon, Saturday, Feb. 25
- Participants can attend the Wednesday or Saturday sessions using the following Zoom links:

- Wednesday sessions: <https://zoom.us/j/92072878067>
- Saturday sessions: <https://zoom.us/j/91243370958>

Ongoing dementia support groups

The training program is part of the ongoing online support groups for family caregivers of persons with dementia being conducted by the Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program of the UOG School of Health. The support group sessions are held on Zoom on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings year-round. The sessions are free of charge to partners,

family members, and other caregivers of persons with dementia who have ties to Guam and the Micronesia region.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Iain Twaddle or Nikolas Gutierrez

Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

Telehealth Geriatric Support Services

University of Guam

Tel: (671) 735-2883


Email: gwep.tgss@triton.uog.edu

Rhoda Orallo

Health Services of the Pacific

Tel: (671) 735-3277

Email: r.orallo@hspguam.com (UOG)



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSING


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Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net



Pursuant to P. L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Board of Professional Licensing (BPL) hereby give notice that it will hold its quarterly board meeting on **Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the BPL-HCPLB Conference Room, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

- Meeting Call to Order
- Determination of Quorum
- Review and Adoption of Agenda
- Review and Adoption of Minutes (12/07/2022)
- Public Comments
- Chairperson’s Report
 - Board Resignations
 - Vacancy on the Board – Rota Representative (Public)
 - 2023 NCARB Regional Summit – Honolulu, HI – (03/02-4/2023)
 - NCARB Visit to Saipan
- Director’s Report
 - 2023 BPL National Councils Meeting Schedule
 - 2023 NCEES Zone Interim Meeting – Houston, TX – (04/27-29/2023)
- Investigator’s Report
- Communications from the Governor’s Office & Legislature
 - Governor’s Office
 - MEMO – Board Resignation
 - Legislature
- Old Business
 - Proposed Regulations for Real Property Appraiser – For Board Approval
 - Proposed Local Examination for Real Property Appraiser – For Board Approval
- New Business
 - Federal Law – Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act
 - Election of Officers
- Pending Applications for Board’s Review
 - New Application
 - Renewal Applications
- Miscellaneous Business
- Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- Announcements
 - Next Meeting Date
 - Adjournment of Meeting



CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

CNMI GOVERNMENT



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP NO.: RFP23-DOL/OSHA- 42300025

SUBMISSION DATE: February 10, 2023 TIME: 9:00 A.M

“CNMI OSHA On-site Consultation Website”

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (<https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/>) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ VICKY BENAVENTE
SECRETARY OF LABOR

/S/ VIVIAN M. LIZAMA
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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Website: <https://cnmiports.com>



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2023

Opening date: January 09, 2023	Closing date: January 27, 2023
Location: SAIPAN	SALARY
Position(s): (1) Receptionist/Secretary	PL 5/1 to 5/12 (\$8.83/hr. to \$15.10/hr.)
(1) Ports Police Officer I	PL 7/1 to 7/12 (\$9.73/hr. to \$16.65/hr.)
Location: PORT OF SAIPAN	SALARY
Position(s): (1) General Maintenance III	PL 7/1 to 7/12 (\$9.73/hr. to \$16.65/hr.)
Location: TINIAN	SALARY
Position(s): (2) General Maintenance I	PL 2/1 to 2/12 (\$7.63/hr. to \$13.04/hr.)
(2) Custodial I	PL 1/1 to 1/12 (\$7.26/hr. to \$12.42/hr.)
4) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee	PL 5/1 (\$8.83/hr.)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the **CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport**. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, January 27, 2023**.

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director



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JRM, GovGuam host cultural resources open house



U.S. NAVY
Staff and specialists working at Marine Corps Camp Blaz and Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Marianas welcomed members of the public to the first Cultural Resources Open House event, Jan. 19. The event was hosted at the University of Guam's Cultural Repository facility. Community members were given the opportunity to ask questions about the resource management processes used at MCBCB. The event was also an opportunity for the public to learn about the partnerships the Department of Defense has made to ensure cultural resources are protected and preserved amidst military activities in the region.

ASAN, Guam—More than 120 members of the community attended a Cultural Resources Open House held at the new Government of Guam Cultural Repository at the University of Guam in Mangilao last Jan. 19.

Joint Region Marianas, in coordination with the Government of Guam and the University of Guam, hosted the event in response to expressed community interest. The open house provided an opportunity for the public to review the status of, and learn more about cultural resources preservation and management in support of the Marine Corps Relocation to Guam.

“The protection of Guam’s cultural resources is important to us,” JRM commander Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson said. “Our cultural and natural resource specialists from Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz and Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Marianas are here today specifically to talk to the people of Guam. Our team is passionate about what they do, and excited to share their work with the community.”

Palau college board holds organizational meeting



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Front row: Alvina Timarong, Rev. Billy G. Kuartei, Romana Wong; Back row: O'Keef Kokichi, Dr. Emais Roberts, and Kione Isechal.

The Palau Community College board of trustees held its annual organizational meeting last Jan. 9, 2023, during which the trustees unanimously voted to re-elect Rev. Billy G. Kuartei as board chairman.

At the same meeting, the board also unanimously elected Romana Wong as vice chairperson and Kione Isechal as secretary and treasurer.

The PCC board also includes as members Alvina Timarong, Dr. Emais Roberts, and student trustee O'Keef Kokichi.

In addition, the PCC board organized its standing committee.

- Academic Programs Committee, chairman, Timarong;
- Finance/Personnel Committee, chairman, Wong;
- Facilities, chairman, Isechal;
- Student Affairs Committee, chairperson, Kokichi.

All committees include key college officials as ad-hoc members.

Dr. Emais Roberts represents the board on the three-member College of Micronesia Land Grant Board of Regents.

The Republic of Palau Public Law 4-2, cited as the Higher Education Act of 1993, mandates that members of the PCC board of trustees meet each year in order to elect its officers and establish its calendar of regular meetings. The annual organizational meeting of the PCC board of trustees is held on the second Monday of January of each year. (PR)

Guam State Historic Preservation Officer Patrick Lujan also attended the event, and said the Guam Cultural Repository would serve as an important facility to protect artifacts discovered throughout Guam, and not only items discovered by DoD.

“We’re happy that this has finally come into fruition through the [2011] Programmatic Agreement,” Lujan said. “[This facility will store] pretty much everything within the inventory of the Guam Museum. This is finally a home for these artifacts.”

University of Guam will staff and manage the repository on behalf of the Department of CHamoru Affairs through a memorandum of agreement. “We are grateful to the University of Guam for allowing us to host this event at their facility,” said Nicholson. “This was an important opportunity for us to not only share our findings but also open up this facility to the community before the artifacts discovered throughout Guam are secured here.”

The 20,000 square-foot repository was funded through a \$12 million DoD grant, as part of the 2011 Programmatic Agreement between DoD and the Government of Guam. The 2011 PA is a codification of the agreement to manage the mitigation plans for cumulative environmental and archaeological effects of the Marine Corps Relocation to Guam. (Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs)

Young endangered trees in Guam find new home

Young missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints helped plant endangered trees for the Guam National Wildlife Refuge at Ritidian Point last Jan. 14, 2023.

Kawika Davis, an employee for the Guam National Wildlife Refuge at Ritidian Point, supervised the planting of the 25 endangered trees. He took the time to describe the type of trees that were being planted and also the need for them on the island.

“The tree species is called *Tabernaemontana rotensis*. The hope of the Refuge is to help reduce these trees from being endangered,” he explained.

A strong downpour couldn’t keep the service-oriented missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from helping with the planting of these trees. They were able to proceed with the planting, which was done fairly quickly, soon after the rain lessened. These trees are considered medium sized and will grow to between 26 and 33 feet tall.

The church encourages its missionaries and members to help with activities that will help the communities they live in; in this case, it helps the island as a whole. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Young missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints helped plant endangered trees for the Guam National Wildlife Refuge at Ritidian Point last Jan. 14, 2023.



Lunar New Year

LEIGH GASES

Lion dancers of the Chinese Association of Saipan start their way through the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Saipan in front of Hyatt general manager Guillaume Delemarle, far right, to usher in the Year of the Rabbit during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LEIGH GASES

The lion dancers of the Chinese Association of Saipan start their way through the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Saipan in front of Hyatt general manager Guillaume Delemarle, far right, to usher good luck in the Year of the Rabbit during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LEIGH GASES

The lion dancers make their way to the Kili Cafe and Terrace of the Hyatt Regency Saipan to ward off evil spirits and usher in good luck in the Year of the Rabbit during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LEIGH GASES

The lion dancers of the Chinese Association of Saipan start their way through the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Saipan to ward off evil spirits and usher in good luck in the Year of the Rabbit during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LEIGH GASES

The lion dancers perform in front of a crowd at the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Saipan to ward off evil spirits and usher in good luck in the Year of the Rabbit during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LEIGH GASES

The lion dancers from the Chinese Association of Saipan dance around Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Guillaume Delemarle, center, with his son and Rose Chan from the Chinese Association of Saipan at the Hyatt lobby during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LEIGH GASES

A lion goes up for the lettuce offering hung atop the Hyatt Regency Saipan lobby entrance, which it "ate" and spat out to spread wealth, prosperity, and good luck, according to the lion dance Chinese tradition.



LEIGH GASES

The lion dancers move to the beat of the drums while the firecrackers explode in the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Saipan to ward off evil spirits and usher in good luck in the Year of the Rabbit during the first day of the Lunar New Year Sunday morning.



LADYVIR CANAPE

Lion dancers of the Chinese Association of Saipan prepare to enter the JP Center building in Garapan to perform inside the many offices housed inside the building to bring good luck in the Year of the Rabbit last Sunday morning.



LADYVIR CANAPE

Lion dancers of the Chinese Association of Saipan perform outside the Realty Management Services office inside the JP Center building to usher in the Year of the Rabbit last Sunday morning.

Opinion

Hafa Adair!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Rep. George Santos is another embarrassment for the GOP. How much is enough?

Rep. George Santos, R-N.Y., quickly became a global punchline when his multiple, contradictory misrepresentations of his background were revealed after he was elected in November. But there's nothing funny about Speaker Kevin McCarthy's refusal to call on Santos to resign, as a few other Republicans have.

Santos was caught in lies about much of his biography. He didn't graduate from—nor apparently even attended—the colleges listed on his resume, didn't work for Goldman Sachs or Citigroup, and does not appear to be Jewish (as he has claimed) or descended from refugees who fled the Holocaust. (Left off the resume was a 2008 fraud charge in Brazil for allegedly using a stolen checkbook; Brazilian authorities recently said they would revive the charge now that they know Santos' whereabouts.) There are also questions about the legality of his fundraising and spending.

Despite various investigations underway, he has been recommended by the House GOP Steering Committee for membership on the Small Business and the Science, Space and Technology committees.

It's small consolation that Santos didn't receive the more prestigious assignments he reportedly coveted on the Financial Services and Foreign Affairs committees. (The Small Business Committee does exercise oversight of the Paycheck Protection Program established in response to business hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.)

Moreover, McCarthy has pooh-poohed complaints about Santos' conduct. Last week the speaker said: "I try to stick by the Constitution. The voters elected him to serve. If there is a concern, and he has to go through the Ethics [Committee], we'll let him move through that." This week the speaker acknowledged that he "always had a few questions" about Santos' resume.

Santos is the subject of a complaint filed with the Ethics Committee by two Democratic House members, who called for an investigation of Santos "for violations of the Ethics in Government Act by failing to file timely, accurate, and complete financial disclosure reports as required by law." He is also being investigated by local prosecutors on Long Island and, according to the New York Times, by federal prosecutors as well. Although Santos has admit-



Santos

See **SANTOS** on Next Page

Body positivity has boomed. But thinness never went away

Iremember the first time I walked into a United Colors of Benetton store when I was 12 years old at the Woodbury Commons outlet mall. The brand, which was all the rage in the 1990s, exemplified the epitome of chic for my tween self.

I went in and picked up a pair of their largest-size pants, pants I'm sure we couldn't afford even on a discount and tried them on. I couldn't get them over my hips. I was devastated.

I felt shame creeping over me, the hair rising on the back of my neck, as I walked out of the dressing room, unable to answer my friend when she asked how they fit. She was a size 6; she didn't know the trauma of the dressing room, how one move could turn a good, positive shopping trip into an experience that made me want to hide.

A dynamic was established, one many women experience: Clothes were not meant to fit me; I was meant to fit into them. Women's clothing dominated my sense of self, how I belonged and literally how I fit in. My relationship with my body became tenuous; it became an unruly artifact I would have to manage around, not one that I comfortably lived inside.

And I was hardly alone.

What is considered in vogue for women's bodies has plagued us for generations. Consider the drop-waist boyish lines of the roaring '20s, the slim hourglass of the Golden Age of Hollywood, the androgynous "twiggy" in the '60s, the emaciated heroin chic in the '90s, or the most unattainable yet: a taut and sky-high derriere, narrow waist, large breasts and thigh gap à la Kim Kardashian.

Last year, trend forecasters and celebrities seemed to proclaim again, "thin is in." Kardashian and her sister Khloe appear to have reduced the size of their butts; celebrities are rumored to take the diabetes drug Ozempic to get their weight down, and I just learned this week what buccal fat removal is.

Most would argue thin never really went out of style—while body positivity and fat inclusion have made strides in recent years with social media influencers, a few plus models being sent down runways, and Lizzo in all her glory—we are still pummeled with the pressure to be thin, or at least have a flat tummy. Even "plus" contorts to a specific type of figure, an hourglass, with a perfect hip-to-waist ratio, as did many of the procedures such as "BBLs" to attain the ideal figure of the last 10 years.

The shape of women's bodies has always been subject to the ebbs and flows of cultural standards. And in nearly all cases, those trends become controls that have deleterious effects on women's lives: eating disorders, fad diets, dangerous injections and surgeries. Not to mention the psychological effects that come with dislik-

By **SAMHITA MUKHOPADHYAY**

Los Angeles Times

Samhita Mukhopadhyay, a writer and editor based in New York, is the author of Outdated: Why Dating Is Ruining Your Love Life. She is the former executive editor of Teen Vogue and the co-editor of Nasty Women: Feminism, Resistance and Revolution in Trump's America.



ing the body you occupy, the social pressure to comply with rules your body may not be able to adhere to, and the anxiety, depression and self-hatred that come along with all of that.

But why do these unattainable standards exist, and why is it so easy to foist them upon us? Well, it's complicated.

More than 30 years ago, Naomi Wolf wrote in "The Beauty Myth": "A culture fixated on female thinness is not an obsession about female beauty, but an obsession about female obedience."

Through that lens, it's not surprising that in a moment when women's rights have been under attack—with the overturning of Roe vs. Wade in this country and in the fight for women's autonomy in Iran—we are also seeing a reversion to a thin aesthetic, for women to minimize themselves, literally. In fact, a 2019 study found that the sexist push for women to reach beauty ideals intensifies as they become more successful, especially at work.

It's hard to disentangle what is a trend, what is media saturation and what is our own desire. Many people find living up to their assigned gender ideals to be empowering. Influencers regularly flaunt their exercise regimen, makeup routine or fashion game, and we avidly follow and envy the results.

Cynics suggest these performances are a delusion, that there is no expression of the self, of gender without mediation from external forces—but they do make beautiful online content. And the reality is most women both capitulate to and embrace the culture's body standards. It is impossible to separate what is imposed and what is our truest self-expression. And at some point, it doesn't matter; the back and forth is the reality.

The unforgiving standards that are pushed on women—through the media, our social networks, our families, the fashion industry—alienate us from our bodies. Something that should be controlled within oneself is instead controlled by outside forces. Sound familiar?

50 years after Roe, the fight for abortion rights is starting over

This should've been a moment for celebration.

A time to celebrate the continuing expansion of American rights, and especially a woman's right to make her own choices about her body and her future. A time to celebrate the Constitution as not merely the legalistic, literal words laid down by the 18th century founders, but rather as a dynamic document that can speak to society's 21st century needs.

But no. On the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision declaring abortion to be a woman's constitutional right, when there should have been dancing in the streets, we are instead still reeling in shock at how the clock has been turned backward.

With the court's radical about-face in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization last June, which overturned Roe as if it had never existed, the country has been suddenly tossed into the past.

It was Jan. 22, 1973, when Roe was handed down.

In those days not only was abortion not a right, but same-sex marriage was still 40 years away and "sodomy" was illegal in many states. Laws banning interracial marriage and guaranteeing the right to use contraception without fear of cops marching into your bedroom had been struck down only a few years earlier.

In 1973, women couldn't easily get credit cards in their own names and could be fired if they became pregnant. Some states made it difficult for them to serve on juries. Elective abortion was illegal in 30 states.

Is that the world we want to go back to? Is that the direction the Supreme Court is taking us?

On the day the Roe decision was announced—a cool, lightly rainy day in Washington—Alan F. Guttmacher, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, sounded exultant: "By this act, hundreds of thousands of American women every year will be spared the medical risks and emotional horrors of back street and self induced abortions."

Many people believed the abortion debate was over.

"The court's 7-2 ruling could bring to an end the emotional and divisive public argument over what should always have been an intensely private and personal matter," editorialized the New York Times.

That couldn't have been more wrong.

The Los Angeles Times offered a more accurate glimpse into the future when it quoted Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Washington, saying: "I do not believe we can relax our stance on such a widespread evil lest our people think that because of the Supreme Court's decision, abortion no longer is murder."

That was a declaration of war.

And so began 50 years during which anti-abortion forces never backed down, never gave up hope of overturning Roe. Speaking on behalf, they said, of millions of unborn babies, the "right to life" movement spread well beyond Catholics to include a broader religious right and others.

They tried to humanize the so-called unborn. They passed re-

strictive laws seeking to chip away, state by state, at Roe (as well as the subsequent court rulings that upheld Roe's basic conclusions). They blocked abortion clinics. They passed out photos of aborted fetuses. Extremists threatened harassment, vandalism and violence, and sometimes carried it out.

Abortion opponents tried to associate their cause with the civil rights movement, comparing Roe to the Supreme Court's 1857 Dred Scott decision denying citizenship and constitutional rights to African Americans. They compared deaths from abortion to the Holocaust.

I accept that most in this movement sincerely believe that innocent lives are being taken. I don't think that the sole aim of most abortion opponents is to "control women's bodies."

But I don't believe some Americans have the right to tell others how to live their lives, or to impose their own morality on women's most personal decisions.

A pregnant woman should be allowed to determine her own future and make decisions about her own body. The rights of a fetus—whether you consider it "alive" or not in its early development—don't outweigh those of the mother.

Furthermore, children should be born to parents who want them and can care for them.

A substantial majority of Americans support abortion rights and had hoped the court would uphold Roe. According to the Guttmacher Institute (named for the doctor quoted above), there were more than 900,000 legal, induced abortions in the U.S. in 2020.

But the overturning of Roe also has ramifications that go beyond abortion. Roe was not a stand-alone case, but was one in a long line of decisions protecting Americans from government interference in personal, private, intimate decisions involving physical autonomy and bodily integrity, family relationships,

The Lore and Lure of Liars

A trilogy of sonnets on it

GOP POTUS a Greedy Officious Person

Who's the guy with the red made-in-China ties who is that bigly fat guy in the MAGA hat the same guy that told more than 3,000 lies cheats on his own golf course and denies that autocratic former POTUS boss of the GOP now living in Florida, a Mar-a-Lago resident a tax return cheat daily losing popularity with a new title GOP Greedy Old President on earth a Gigantic Offensive Personality that he is a malignant narcissist is evident thinks he won the election, no grasp of reality only for himself was he ever benevolent disgrace to democracy the founder of MAGA now multiple lawsuits will continue his saga.

January 6 Report a Retort

He's charged with obstruction of justice with leaders like that who can trust us the report is very long 845 pages plus

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Turning adversity into prosperity, little by little

I remember hearing the Chamorro economic strategy of doing things of "little by little." That is actually a good strategy, especially when taking on a big task. There is no doubt the task at hand now for the governor is to literally turn the adversity created by Ralph into prosperity for the people. But too often when people are hit with adversity they surrender to and even sometimes drown in the adversity, never thinking about how to reverse the situation—a give-in or give-up attitude. There is often no magic economic pill, no investor to save us all or anything that can immediately create the conditions for a complete reversal, but I feel confident in saying that our new governor is nothing like the previous one and that there is real hope for things to be turned around. However, this is where the Cham-

By **NICHOLAS GOLDBERG**

Los Angeles Times



Nicholas Goldberg is an associate editor and Op-Ed columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

child rearing and procreation. That includes the right to use contraception, to marry whom you want and to engage in the sort of consensual sex you want in your own home.

Thanks to Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr.'s ruling in the Dobbs case, however, these decisions are all potentially endangered because the rights they confer are not specifically enumerated in the Constitution and may not be "deeply rooted," as Alito put it, in the nation's history and traditions.

Alito tried to suggest those decisions were not imperiled, but they obviously are, though they have made this a better, freer, fairer country.

At this particular moment in history, when we should be celebrating a half-century of progress, it is depressing to be grieving instead for rights that have been withdrawn, and for the greater distance we now have to travel if the United States is ever to achieve its twin goals of liberty and equality.

The most that can be said on this sad anniversary is that the fight for reproductive rights will continue, despite the court's ruling. For another 50 years, if that's what it takes.

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

who all will get thrown under the bus
his role encouraging violent extremists
POTUS 45 and his lawyers scheme us
many other high political mucky mucks
shush up their hard working sitting ducks
Oath Keepers commit seditious conspiracy
POTUS friend R. Stone acts deliriously
the table of contents pages by itself alone
point back to Trump on his gold toilet throne
he tells D.C. mob at the rally, "it will be wild"
the January 6 Committee report has been filed.

orro strategy of "little by little" becomes so important, as committing to small efforts to change things often collectively turn into big changes. It is critical that we (the CNMI) start working little by little on fixing the old and creating the new things to rebuild our economy.

Turning adversity into prosperity is more about the mindset of those who are challenged than their ability, which is why we see some people just give up, even when their life is at stake, because it requires thinking and doing outside the box, but in economics it's referred to as breaking and creating paradigms. There is a world of unfinished economic-related issues that Ralph didn't address or complete, as he was working on restoring Garapan for both of his terms and it's still not finished. It is critical for our economic present and future to begin work on rebuilding our economy now as the trust the governor wanted has already been restored with his election and I'm sure he's not going to do anything to change that fact.

There is no doubt that we, as a people, are facing genuine adversity. However, by taking on the smaller projects left undone or never started, our economy can begin to start shoring up itself, little by little. We must now try to turn adversity into prosperity, little by little.

Ambrose M. Bennett

Kagman III, Saipan

SANTOS

From Page 8

ted to "embellishing" his resume, he has otherwise denied any wrongdoing, saying, "I am not a criminal."

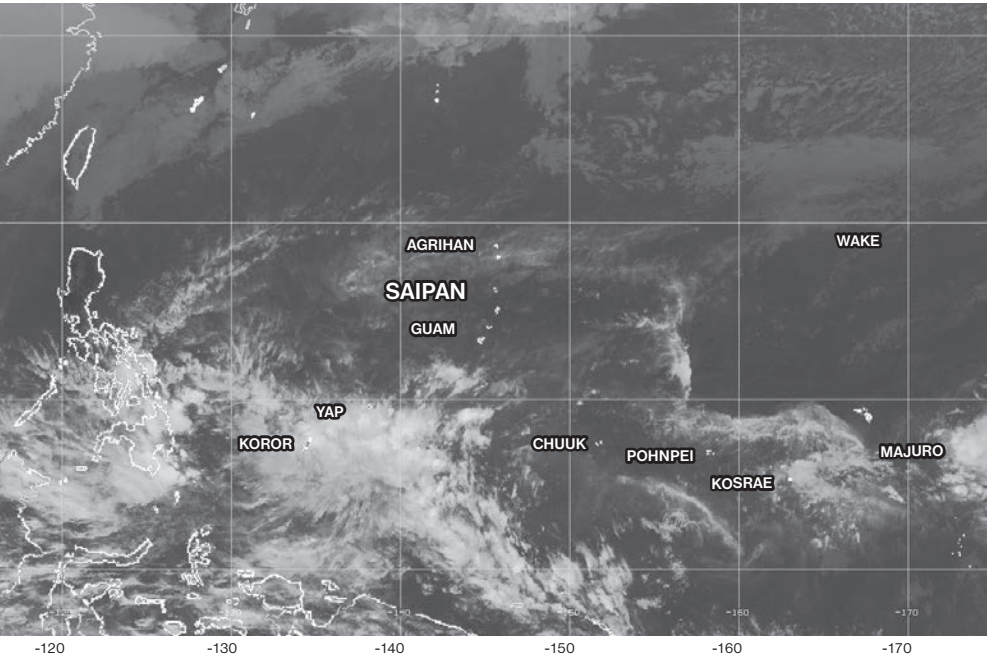
Santos is obviously entitled to due process and the presumption of innocence, but the baroque misrepresentations he has admitted to—so-called "embellishments"—make clear that he doesn't belong in the House. McCarthy, however, has refused to grasp that point, perhaps because a Santos resignation would shrink the Republicans' already small House majority. Last week, McCarthy mused that "a lot of people here" had fabricated part of their resumes.

It's true that other politicians have exaggerated their credentials, including President Biden years ago, which is why it's unlikely that Congress will approve a Santos-inspired bill to require candidates for Congress to file information about their educational background, military service and employment history. A candidate who knowingly and willfully provided false information would be punished with a \$100,000 fine, one year in prison, or both. (The legislation could also pose constitutional problems. For example, the Supreme Court has said that some laws that punish lying violate the 1st Amendment.) Still, Santos' fabrications are so extensive and audacious as to put him in a mind-boggling class by himself.

Even so, Santos' lies seem trivial compared with some of the outlandish and offensive statements made by other House Republicans, such as Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, who has been assigned to House Homeland Security and Oversight committees after losing her committee assignments in the previous Congress. It's clear that fringe figures and fabulists are welcome in the new House Republican majority.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny	
86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	75°	86°	75°	86°	75°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 9:08 AM, MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2023
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Visible satellite shows partly sunny skies and isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters forecast zones. The buoys reveal combined seas of 6 to 9 feet composed mostly of east swell and wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:11 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:12 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:49 AM	8:44 PM	-
Wednesday	9:34 AM	9:43 PM	-
Thursday	10:15 AM	10:38 PM	-
Friday	10:54 AM	11:31 PM	-
Saturday	11:33 AM	-	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 63°	
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	30° / 18°	
Hong Kong	Cloudy	66° / 64°	
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 71°	
London	Showers	39° / 34°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 51°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 75°	
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 59°	
Miami	Sunny	70° / 55°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	44° / 35°	
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Showers	43° / 34°	
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 43°	
Rome	Rain	59° / 50°	
Salem	Sunny	56° / 38°	
San Francisco	Sunny	64° / 46°	
Seoul	Sunny	27° / 14°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	46° / 34°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	46° / 34°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:27 AM	Low Tide	-0.78	
10:24 AM	High Tide	1.86	
4:01 PM	Low Tide	0.92	
8:57 PM	High Tide	1.86	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 17, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3, 6 via Incheon	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
TW9308	3:30AM	7:10AM	2, 4	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6	TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW9307	9:00PM	2:30AM+1	1, 5
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. <i>(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)</i>							

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS					
INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022					
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			TINIAN TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.		10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)
SAIPAN TO ROTA			ROTA TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.		9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.		2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	
SAIPAN TO GUAM			GUAM TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.		12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.		6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

Partnership paves way for metal buildings

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Triple J Enterprises, Inc. has partnered up with Butler Manufacturing to speed up the construction process in the CNMI and Micronesia through pre-engineered metal buildings.

Butler Manufacturing offers quality building products and professional construction services from the U.S. and has been in existence since 1901 or for more than 122 years.

A Butler Building kit is built in a factory in California and is shipped to their client. The prefabricated materials eliminates some labor which there is a shortage of in the CNMI.

Along with speeding up installation and lowering construction costs, it creates low-maintenance structures that can withstand the weather in the islands.

In an interview with Scott Wilson, regional sales manager for Butler, he said that the buildings can withstand up to 194-mph winds and has a 25-year warranty.

According to Wilson, Butler doesn't do residential projects, but they focus on three things or CCI for short, which stands for Community, Commercial, and Industrial.

Community projects could be a sports venue such as a football training facility; commercial projects could be Costco warehouses; and industrial projects could either be factories or aircraft hangars, to name a few of what Butler is able to design and build for a client.

Dan Murrell, senior vice president of Triple J Enterprises,



From left, Mario Valentino, Triple J Enterprises construction operations manager; Robert Jones, president of Triple J Enterprises; Scott Wilson, regional sales manager of Butler Manufacturing; Dan Murrell, senior vice president of Triple J Enterprises; Mike Sablan, vice president of Triple J Enterprises; and Fred Camacho, business development manager; after an interview with Saipan Tribune at the Surf Rider Resort Hotel in Chalan Kanoa.

prises, said that "we're really happy to have Butler part of the team and we're excited about the new possibilities that it brings."

As to why the partnership was formed, Murrell said it was a need for their own development which grew from there and has been in discussion for

a couple of years.

"Part of the beauty of the Butler System is that they have sort of a further processing in their fabrications that allow the build-

ings to go up more like an erector set that speeds along and also limit some of the labor requirements in the field on the islands, which is key. We're very challenged by lack of construction labor in the Marianas, and so part of the beauty of the system is that you're getting to have the prefabrication that eliminates some of the need for some labor that a traditional system from another company requires," said Murrell.

Additionally, after the interview with Triple J and Butler on Friday night, a social mixer was held at Surf's Club with contractors, businesses, and government agencies, which include RNV Construction, R3A General Services, Joeten, Pacific Engineering, Northern Marianas Housing Corp., and Northern Marianas Technical Institute, to name a few that allowed an opportunity to educate and expand what the partnership means.

In the mixer, Wilson said "it's my pleasure to be here

and happy to be partnered with Triple J to bring the Butler Systems back to the island. It's been some time since we've had a presence here."

He then talked about the company and said that he is very excited with the partnership with Triple J. "We've been working closely with Triple J for the past six months, getting to know each other, and training with each other. We also got to make sure that our values are aligned, so we're very excited for this partnership."

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, along with his wife Wella, was also in attendance and said in an interview with Saipan Tribune that the partnership is beneficial for the community.

"Butler Buildings is a very reputable steel building company from the states and it's globally recognized, and so I'm very happy that they have formed a partnership with a very reputable local company like Triple J."

"We look at good things happening with this partnership in our community," said Gov. Palacios.



Contractors are seen during the mixer to learn more about Butler Manufacturing and its partnership with Triple J at the Surf's Club last Friday.



DONNA LIWAG

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, second from left, with his wife Wella; are seen with Scott Wilson, regional sales manager of Butler Manufacturing, left; Jay Jones, back, center, Mario Valentino, Triple J construction operations manager; and Mike Sablan, Triple J vice president; during the mixer event held for contractors to learn about the partnership of Butler and Triple J last Friday at the Surf's Club.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Yellen in Zambia to discuss debt to China, public health

LUSAKA, Zambia (AP)—U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is in Zambia on the second leg of her African tour, a stop aimed at promoting American investment and ties while she's in a capital city that is visibly dominated by Chinese dollars.

Visitors to Lusaka arriving at the renovated Kenneth Kaunda International Airport see a facility expanded in 2015 with Chinese financing. A ride into the city passes billboards and newly built firms bearing Chinese signage, more evidence of Beijing's influence and increasing competition

with the U.S.

But the growth that the country has experienced has come with a heavier debt burden. Zambia became Africa's first pandemic-era sovereign to default when it failed to make a \$42.5 million bond payment in November 2020. Negotiations over how to deal with the debt load have been ongoing.

How Zambia's debt is renegotiated with the Chinese will provide a test case for how lenient China will be with other overextended nations that face debt distress.

Survey: Firms expect job cuts in '23 amid recession fears

NEW YORK (AP)—A sur-

vey of national economists found that more businesses now expect job reductions at their firms and to spend less on expansions for the first time since the pandemic, a sign that the Federal Reserve's push to raise interest rates is doing its job to slow the economy.

But the survey shows that business owners are still concerned that the Fed's decision-making could push too hard on the economy and potentially put the U.S. into a recession this year.

The January survey by the National Association for Business Economics found that its respondents put on average a reading of -7 on how much they plan to hire

at their firms, down from previous reading of +8 in October, when NABE did its previous survey.

However, due to inflation, the survey shows that businesses still expect to pay higher wages for the workers they are holding onto.

"The results of the January 2023 NABE Business Conditions Survey indicate widespread concern about entering a recession this year," said NABE President Julia Coronado, in a statement.

Biden's next climate hurdle: enticing Americans to buy green

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden per-

suaded Democrats in Congress to provide hundreds of billions of dollars to fight climate change. Now comes another formidable task: enticing Americans to buy millions of electric cars, heat pumps, solar panels and more efficient appliances.

It's a public relations challenge that could determine whether the country meets Biden's ambitious goal to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030.

Relying on tax credits and rebates made the climate legislation—it was approved in August with only Democratic votes—more politically palatable than regulations that force

wholesale changes in polluting industries.

But it also means the administration's battle against global warming will be waged "one household at a time," said Shannon Baker-Branstetter, who works on energy issues at the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank closely aligned with the White House.

"It is very incremental," she said. "So it requires a very sophisticated communications strategy."

Biden acknowledged the hurdle during a recent Cabinet meeting as he talked about the incentives that are becoming available this year.

Nation

Sheriff: Suspect in dance club shooting killed self in van

MONTEREY PARK, Calif. (AP)—The hunt for a gunman who killed 10 people at a ballroom dance club during Lunar New Year celebrations ended Sunday when authorities found him dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in the van he used to flee after people thwarted his attempt at a second shooting.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna identified the man as 72-year-old Huu Can Tran and said no other suspects were at large. Speaking at an evening news conference, he added that the motive remained unclear for the attack, which wounded 10 more.

Luna did not have the exact ages of the victims but said they all appeared to be over 50. Seven of the wounded people remained in the hospital, he said.

The sheriff added that the suspect was carrying what he described as a semi-automatic pistol with an extended magazine, and a second handgun was discovered in the van where Tran was found dead.

The shooting late Saturday in the predominantly Asian American community of Monterey Park cast a shadow over the New Years festivities and sent a wave of fear through Asian American communities in the Los Angeles area. Other cities



Investigators are seen outside Star Dance Studio in Monterey Park, Calif., Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023.

AP

sent extra officers to watch over the celebrations.

Also speaking at the news conference, Congresswoman Judy Chu said she still has questions about the attack but hopes residents now feel safe.

"The community was in fear thinking that they should not go to any events because there was an active shooter," Chu

said, adding, "You are no longer in danger."

"What was the motive for this shooter?" she said. "Did he have a mental illness? Was he a domestic violence abuser? How did he get these guns and was it through legal means or not?"

Earlier Sunday, law enforcement officials swarmed and entered the van after surround-

ing it for hours before going in. A person's body appeared to be slumped over the wheel and was later removed from the vehicle.

Luna previously released photos of an Asian man who was believed to be the suspect.

The van was found in Torrance, another community home to many Asian Americans, about 22 miles (34.5

kilometers) from that second location.

Luna said the shooting was at the Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park.

Monterey Park Police Chief Scott Wiese said Sunday evening that within three minutes of receiving the call, officers arrived on the scene. There, they found extensive carnage

inside and people trying to flee through all the doors.

"When they came into the parking lot it, was chaos," Wiese said.

About 20 to 30 minutes after the first attack, the gunman entered the Lai Lai Ballroom in nearby Alhambra. But people wrested the weapon away from him before he fled, according to Luna.

Hours earlier, Luna said authorities were looking for a white van after witnesses reported seeing the suspect flee from Alhambra in such a vehicle.

Members of a SWAT team entered the van a short time later and looked through its contents before walking away.

The massacre was the nation's fifth mass killing this month. It was also the deadliest attack since May 24, when 21 people were killed in an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

Monterey Park is a city of about 60,000 people on the eastern edge of Los Angeles and is composed mostly of Asian immigrants from China or first-generation Asian Americans. The shooting happened in the heart of its downtown where red lanterns decorated the streets for the Lunar New Year festivities. A police car was parked near a large banner that proclaimed "Happy Year of the Rabbit!"

'Here again': Abortion activists rally 50 years after Roe

MADISON, Wis. (AP)—From beach cities to snow-covered streets, abortion supporters rallied by the thousands on Sunday to demand protections for reproductive rights and mark the 50th anniversary of the now-overturned Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision that established federal protections for the procedure.

The reversal of Roe in June unleashed a flurry of legislation in the states, dividing them between those that have restricted or banned abortion and those that have sought to defend access. The Women's March, galvanized during Donald Trump's presidential inauguration in 2017 amid a national reckoning over sexual assaults, said it has refocused on state activism after Roe was tossed.

"This fight is bigger than Roe," Women's March said in a tweet. "They thought that we would stay home and that this would end with Roe — they were wrong."

A dozen Republican-governed states have implemented sweeping bans on abortion, and several others seek to do the same. But those moves have been offset by gains on the other side.

Abortion opponents were defeated in votes on ballot measures in Kansas, Michigan and Kentucky. State courts have blocked several bans from taking effect. Myriad efforts are underway to help patients travel to states that allow abortions or use medication for self-managed abortions. And some Democratic-led states have taken steps to shield patients and providers from lawsuits originating in states where the procedure is banned.

Organizers with the Women's March said their strategy moving forward will focus largely on measures at the state level. But freshly energized anti-abortion activists are increasingly turning their attention to Congress, with the aim of pushing for a potential national abortion restriction down the line.

Sunday's main march was held in Wisconsin, where upcoming elections could determine the state Supreme Court's power balance and future abortion rights. But rallies took place in dozens of cities, including Florida's state capital of Tallahassee, where Vice President Kamala Harris gave a fiery speech before a boisterous crowd.

"Can we truly be free if fami-

lies cannot make intimate decisions about the course of their own lives?" Harris said. "And can we truly be free if so-called leaders claim to be ... 'on the vanguard of freedom' while they dare to restrict the rights of the American people and attack the very foundations of freedom?"

In Madison, thousands of abortion rights supporters donned coats and gloves to march in below-freezing temperatures through downtown to the state Capitol.

"It's just basic human rights at this point," said Alaina Gato, a Wisconsin resident who joined her mother, Meg Wheeler, on the Capitol steps to protest.

They said they plan to vote in the April Supreme Court election. Wheeler also said she hoped to volunteer as a poll worker and canvass for Democrats, despite identifying as an independent voter.

"This is my daughter. I want to make sure she has the right to choose whether she wants to have a child," Wheeler said.

Buses of protestors streamed into the Wisconsin capital from Chicago and Milwaukee, armed with banners and signs calling for the Legislature to repeal the state's ban.

Dems: Biden should be 'embarrassed'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Senior Democrats, dismayed by a steady stream of startling disclosures, expressed criticism Sunday of how President Joe Biden handled classified material after leaving office as vice president and disappointment that the White House has not been more forthcoming with the public.

Lawmakers who might have anticipated questions focusing on the debt limit or Ukraine aid when they were booked last week for the Sunday news shows found themselves quizzed about the latest development over the weekend in the document drama that has put Biden's presidency on the defensive: During a search Friday of Biden's home in Wilmington, Delaware, the FBI found additional documents with classified markings and took possession of some of his handwritten notes, the president's lawyer said Saturday.

Biden should be "embarrassed by the situation," said Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the second-ranking Democrat in the Senate, adding that the president had ceded the moral high ground on an issue that

has already entangled former President Donald Trump. Special counsels appointed by Attorney General Merrick Garland are investigating both cases.

"Well, of course. Let's be honest about it. When that information is found, it diminishes the stature of any person who is in possession of it because it's not supposed to happen. ... The elected official bears ultimate responsibility," Durbin said.

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W. Va., said Biden "should have a lot of regrets. ... You just might as well say, 'Listen, it's irresponsible.'" The president told reporters on Thursday that he had "no regrets" over how and when the public learned about the documents and that there was "no there there."

Despite their criticism, Biden's fellow Democrats defended what they said was his cooperation with the Justice Department as the search for additional classified material unfolds. They contrasted it with Trump's resistance to efforts to recover hundreds of documents after he left office.

"It is outrageous that either

occurred," Durbin said. "But the reaction by the former president and the current president could not be in sharper contrast."

Biden voluntarily allowed the FBI into his home on Friday, but the lack of a warrant did not dim the extraordinary nature of the search. It compounded the embarrassment to Biden that started in earlier in January with the disclosure that the president's lawyers had found a "small number" of classified records at a former office at the Penn Biden Center in Washington shortly before the Nov. 8 elections.

The White House has disclosed that Biden's team found classified documents and official records on three other occasions in recent months — in follow-up searches on Dec. 20 in the garage of his Wilmington home, and on Jan. 11 and 12 in his home library.

The discoveries have become a political liability as Biden prepares to kick off his 2024 reelection bid, and they undercut his efforts to portray an image of propriety to the American public after the tumultuous presidency of his predecessor, Trump.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

China rings in Year of Rabbit with most COVID rules lifted

BEIJING (AP)—People across China rang in the Lunar New Year on Sunday with large family gatherings and crowds visiting temples after the government lifted its strict “zero-COVID” policy, marking the biggest festive celebration since the pandemic began three years ago. The Lunar New Year is the most important annual holiday in China. Each year is named after one of the 12 signs of the Chinese zodiac in a repeating cycle, with this year being the Year of the Rabbit. For the past three years, celebrations were muted in the shadow of the pandemic. With the easing of most COVID-19 restrictions that had confined millions to their homes, people could finally make their first trip back to their hometowns to reunite with their families without worrying about the hassles of quarantine, potential lockdowns and suspension of travel. Larger public celebrations also returned for what is known as the Spring Festival in China, with the capital hosting thousands of cultural events—on a larger scale than a year ago. “He has never experienced what a traditional new year is like because he was too young three years ago and he had no memory of that,” said Si Jia, who brought her 7-year-old son to the Qianmen area near Beijing’s Tiananmen Square to experience the festive vibe and learn about traditional Chinese culture. Nearly 53,000 offered prayers at Beijing’s Lama Temple but the crowds appeared to be smaller compared to pre-pandemic days. The Tibetan Buddhist site allows up to 60,000 visitors a day, citing safety reasons, and requires an advance reservation.

Minister: Germany won't block Poland giving Ukraine tanks

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—The German government will not object if Poland decides to send Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine, Germany’s top diplomat said Sunday, indicating movement on supplying weapons that Kyiv has described as essential to its ability to fend off an intensified Russian offensive. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock told French TV channel LCI that Poland has not formally asked for Berlin’s approval to share some of its German-made Leopards but added “if we were asked, we would not stand in

the way.” German officials “know how important these tanks are” and “this is why we are discussing this now with our partners,” Baerbock said in interview clips posted by LCI. Ukraine’s supporters pledged billions of dollars in military aid to Ukraine during a meeting at Ramstein Air Base in Germany on Friday. International defense leaders discussed Ukraine’s urgent request for the Leopard 2 tanks, and the failure to work out an agreement overshadowed the new commitments. Germany is one of the main donors of weapons to Ukraine, and it ordered a review of its Leopard 2 stocks in preparation for a possible green light. Nonetheless, the government in Berlin has shown caution at each step of increasing its military aid to Ukraine, a hesitancy seen as rooted in its history and political culture.

Brazil's new president works to reverse Amazon deforestation

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—Shaking a traditional rattle, Brazil’s incoming head of Indigenous affairs recently walked through every corner of the agency’s headquarters — even its coffee room — as she invoked help from ancestors during a ritual cleansing. The ritual carried extra meaning for Joenia Wapichana, Brazil’s first Indigenous woman to command the agency charged with protecting the Amazon rainforest and its people. Once she is sworn in next month under newly inaugurated President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Wapichana promises to clean house at an agency that critics say has allowed the Amazon’s resources to be exploited at the expense of the environment. As Wapichana performed the ritual, Indigenous people and government officials enthusiastically chanted “Yoohoo! Funai is ours!” — a reference to the agency she will lead. Environmentalists, Indigenous people and voters sympathetic to their causes were important to Lula’s narrow victory over former President Jair Bolsonaro. Now Lula is seeking to fulfill campaign pledges he made to them on a wide range of issues, from expanding Indigenous territories to halting a surge in illegal deforestation.

To carry out these goals, Lula is appointing well-known environmentalists and Indigenous people to key positions at Funai and other agencies that Bolsonaro had filled with allies of agribusiness and military officers.

DEATH AND FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

In Loving Memory of † DRA. OFELIA PONCE RAMOS

Born on July 5, 1942,
was called by our Heavenly Father on January 14, 2023

In her new life, she now joins her:

Spouse: †Meliton L. Ramos Jr.
Parents: †Alejandra B. Ponce
†Timoteo Ponce, Sr

Her memories will forever live in the hearts of her sibling, children, cousins, and grandchildren:

Siblings: Myrna P. Tumaneng/
†Dr. George Tumaneng
Dr. Aida P. Ponce
Timoteo B. Ponce, Jr/
Corazon Ponce

Children: Mitchell P. Ramos/
Hannah A. Ramos
Hazel R. Hart/ Brian P. Hart Sr.
Mary Dawn P. Ramos/
Timothy D. Diehl

Cousins: Thelma Basilio
Precy Basilio
Rose Adams/ Lewie Adams

Grandchildren:
Abigail Marie Hart
Brian P. Hart Jr.
Savannah A. Ramos



She is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and godchildren.

On Wednesday, January 25th, 2023, Rosary and Funeral mass will be said beginning at 8:00 am, followed by public viewing at Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Refreshments will be served at Joeten Dai Dai Social Hall immediately after the program.

With heartfelt Si Yu’us Ma’ase, Maraming Salamat, and Thank you for your kindness, thoughts, and prayers,

From the Family

Overdrive

2023 CX-50 is mid-size Mazda commuter fun



The Mazda CX-50 is designed for that every day commuter. MARC GRASSO/MEDIANEWS GROUP/BOSTON HERALD/TNS

By MARC D. GRASSO
BOSTON HERALD

Welcome Back Mazda, it's been too long!
In Grasso's Garage this week, we enjoyed Mazda's recent release of the 2023 CX-50. Born in the SUV class, the CX range is commuter-engaged fun with limited frills and thrills. The 5 seater CX-50 is specifically designed for the

everyday commuter.
Wrapped in Machine Gray Metallic, the CX-50 is spacious for the driver and passengers alike. Its lackluster infotainment system is typical of Mazda. Protruding from the center dash, it's just large enough to see without obscuring your view. Powering the 10.25 inch infotainment operation is a center console dial, allowing you to keep your eyes on the road while operating. The volume knob is conveniently located in the center console.
Our 2.5L Turbo charged Premium Plus AWD tester was flawless. It had tons of get up and go, excellent ride quality and nice styling. With 227 horsepower and 310 pound-feet of torque, the CX-50 means business. We liked that the six-speed

automatic transmission still had a shifter as well as option manual when pushed over like past vehicle models. Twenty-inch wheels, leather seats, sunroof, ventilated and heated seats, SiriusXM, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto were also a few items that came standard in our tester. Over a week of highway, city and long-distance

driving, the CX-50 did great on all terrains, and mileage came in at a commendable 25.7 mpg. I would like to have seen more legroom width in the front seats, but I am not complaining at all.
Mazda manufactures realistic automobiles for realistic consumers. Well priced and well designed, the CX-50 has a place in Grasso's Garage.

NUTS & BOLTS

- 2023 Mazda CX-50
- MSRP: \$42,350
- MPG: 23 city / 29 highway / 25.7 as tested
- As Tested: \$44,750

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Battery packs are a great investment

Q: Are jumper packs a good investment? The idea of jumping your car battery without having to find someone to help is very appealing, especially if you are on your own. Prices vary widely. Any thoughts or recommendations?

N.D. Hometown, Illinois
A: About the size of a small loaf of bread, those battery packs can be lifesavers. Also known as battery banks or power banks, they can not only jump-start a car, but recharge your smartphone and other devices. Look for one with a capacity of about 10,000 mAh and peak output about 1,000 amps. Like anything, you get what you pay for, but you can find many good units for under \$100.

■■■
Q: I have a question that seems like it should be a no-brainer, but there is controversy in our household about this! A new car comes with tires. There are recommended air pressure measurements inscribed on the inside of the driver door. When a set of tires are bought to replace the originals, does one fill the tires to the pressures listed on the new tires or the door? I hope your answer puts this discussion to rest!

A.T., Plainville, Connecticut
A: There is a good reason for the sticker on the door: It is the proper pressure no matter what may be molded into the tires' sidewalls. The pressure on the tires is its maximum safe inflation pressure, not the pressure to which you should inflate them. May you rest and have peace.

■■■
Q: My 2011 Toyota RAV4 with 95,000 miles has the "check engine" sensor and flashing "auto LSD" sensor on simultaneously. The situation began shortly after I encountered heavy rain on an interstate highway. Auto Zone performed a courtesy computer test and the report indicated two possible causes both involving the EVAP system: either replace

MOTORMOUTH
By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.



Battery banks or power banks are a great investment. They can not only jump-start a car, but recharge your smartphone and other devices. MARIO KELICHHAUS/DREAMSTIME/TNS

the vapor canister or the leak detection pump is stuck "off." Someone suggested water may have entered that system and use "dry gas" product, but that has not resolved the problem. Can you offer any advice?

J.K., Virginia Beach, Virginia
A: It is uncommon for water to enter the vapor canister, but I am not saying it's impossible. The most common cause is overfilling the gas tank, which forces liquid gasoline into the canister that is designed to hold fuel vapors. Nevertheless you may have to replace the canister, the pump or both.

■■■
Q: Back in 1987, I had an Oldsmobile Cutlass that had a standard safety feature that when the directionals were left on, the ignition chimes would sound off. Haven't seen another vehicle with this safety feature since. Shouldn't this be a standard safety feature in every vehicle?

K.S., Lowell, Massachusetts
A: This would be a fabulous feature. I can't tell you how many times I have followed someone at an extended distance expecting them to turn. More often than not, they make a lane change in the other direction. Timed, self-canceling turn signals is the way to go. My Harley has had this feature for many years.

■■■
Q: I took my 2020 Subaru Forester with a 4-cylinder 2.5-liter engine to a local shop for routine full synthetic oil change. I change the oil every 6 months, regardless of mileage. When I remarked to the service adviser that I planned to make a 1,200-mile trip to Southern California, he recommended I bring it back right after my trek because "the engine isn't used to being driven that far." What do you say?
R.W., Monument, Colorado
A: That's baloney.

FIRST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory
We, the family of the late

† Melchor Ulloa Maratita
September 13, 1952 – February 01, 2022

would like to invite all our relatives and friends to join us in prayer as we commemorate the First Year Death Anniversary of our beloved father, grandpa, and great grandpa.

Daily mass of intention will be offered at 6:00 p.m. at San Antonio Parish Church, except Sunday (January 29th) is at 7:00 a.m. beginning January 24th-February 01, 2023.

Your presence, thoughts, and prayers will be forever appreciated.

Un Dangkulo Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank you!

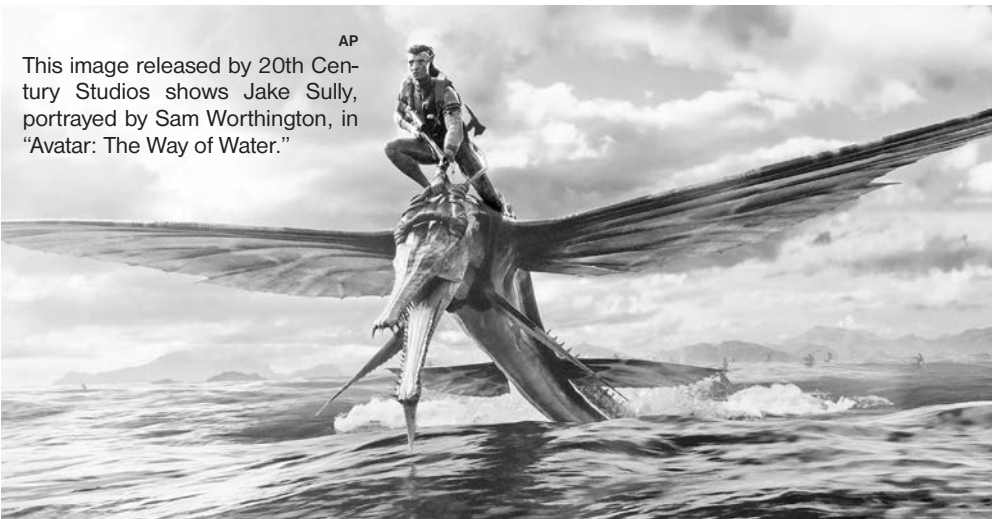
From the Children and Families of the Late
†Melchor Ulloa and †Isabel Sablan Maratita

Life & Style

‘Avatar’ marks 6 straight weeks at No. 1, crosses \$2 billion

NEW YORK (AP)—James Cameron’s “Avatar: The Way of Water” led ticket sales in movie theaters for the sixth straight weekend, making it the first film to have such a sustained reign atop the box office since 2009’s “Avatar.”

The Walt Disney Co.’s “The Way of Water” added \$19.7 million in U.S. and Canadian theaters over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday. Its global total has now surpassed \$2 billion, putting it sixth all-time and just ahead of “Spider-Man: No Way Home.” Domestically, “The Way of Water” is up to \$598 million. Continued robust international sales (\$56.3



This image released by 20th Century Studios shows Jake Sully, portrayed by Sam Worthington, in “Avatar: The Way of Water.”

million for the weekend) has helped push the “Avatar” sequel to \$2.024 billion worldwide. A year ago, “Spider-Man: No Way Home” also topped the box office for six weekends, but

did it over the course of seven weeks. You have to go back to Cameron’s original “Avatar” to find a movie that stayed No. 1 for such a long span. (“Avatar” ultimately topped out at seven weeks.) Before that, the only film in the past 25 years to manage the feat was another Cameron film, “Titanic” (1997) went undefeated for 15 weeks.

“The Way of Water” has now reached a target that Cameron himself set for the very expensive sequel. Ahead of its release, Cameron said becoming “the third or fourth highest-grossing film in history” was “your break even.”

The box-office domination for “The Way of Water” has been aided, in part, by a dearth of formidable challengers. The only new wide release from a major studio on the weekend was the thriller “Missing,” from Sony’s Screen Gems and Stage 6 Films. A low-budget sequel to 2018’s “Searching,” starring Storm Reid as a teenager seeking her missing mother, “Missing” plays out across computer

screens. The film, budgeted at \$7 million, debuted with \$9.3 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1	“Avatar: The Way of Water,”	\$19.7 million.
2	“Puss in Boots: The Last Wish,”	\$11.5 million.
3	“M3gan,”	\$9.8 million.
4	“Missing,”	\$9.3 million.
5	“A Man Called Otto,”	\$9 million.
6	“Plane,”	\$5.3 million.
7	“House Party,”	\$1.8 million.
8	“That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime The Movie,”	\$1.5 million.
9	“Black Panther: Wakanda Forever,”	\$1.4 million.
10	“The Whale,”	\$1.3 million.

Jeremy Renner says he broke 30-plus bones in snowplow mishap

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actor Jeremy Renner says he broke more than 30 bones in a snowplow accident on New Year’s Day.

Renner, 52, said earlier that he is recovering at home from what Nevada authorities say were serious chest injuries



Renner

he suffered when he was run over by his 7-ton Pistenbully snow groomer while helping free a relative’s car on a private road near Lake Tahoe.

In social media posts Saturday, Renner expressed “much love and appreciation” to people for their “messages

and thoughtfulness.”

“These 30 plus broken bones will mend, grow stronger, just like the love and bond with family and friends deepens,” he wrote.

He also said “morning workouts, resolutions all changed this particular new years Spawned from tragedy for my entire family, and quickly focused into uniting actionable love.”

Earlier, in a response

to a Twitter post Monday about his Paramount+ series “Mayor of Kingstown,” Renner said that “Outside my brain fog in recovery, I was very excited to watch episode 201 with my family at home.”

The two-time Oscar nominee also plays Hawkeye in Marvel’s “Avengers” movies and has a recurring role in the “Mission Impossible” franchise.

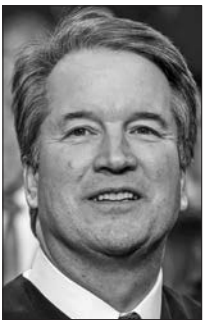
Sundance doc looks into Brett Kavanaugh investigation

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—A new documentary looks into the sexual misconduct allegations against Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh and raises questions about the depth of the FBI investigation in 2018.

“Justice,” from filmmaker Doug Liman, debuted Friday night at the Sundance Film Festival to a sold-out theater surrounded by armed guards.

The film, made under intense secrecy, focuses on allegations

made by Kavanaugh’s Yale classmate Deborah Ramirez that were detailed in a New Yorker article in 2018. Ramirez alleged that at a gathering with friends when she was a freshman in 1983, Kavanaugh pulled down his pants and thrust his penis at her. Kavanaugh has denied



Kavanaugh

those claims. “Justice” also plays a taped recording of a tip given to the FBI from another Yale classmate, Max Stier, that describes a similar incident that the FBI never investigated.

The Stier report was previously detailed in 2019 by New York Times reporters

Robin Pogebrin and Kate Kelly as part of their book “The Education of Brett Kavanaugh: An Investigation.” But the details of it came under scrutiny. After the story was posted online but before it was in the print edition, the Times revised the story to add that the book reported that the woman supposedly involved in the incident declined to be interviewed, and that her friends say she doesn’t recall the incident.

Time’s Up to halt operations, shift resources to legal fund

NEW YORK (AP)—The Golden Globes carpet typically glitters with crystal-studded gowns in pastel hues, but it looked different in January 2018: The ballgowns were black, and the night’s key accessory was a pin that read “Time’s Up.” Onstage, Oprah Winfrey brought guests to their feet with a warning to powerful abusers: “Their time is up!”

Five years later, Time’s Up—the now-embattled anti-harassment organization founded with fanfare during the early

days of the #MeToo reckoning against sexual misconduct—is ceasing operations, at least in its current form.

A year after pledging a “major reset” following a scandal involving its leaders’ dealings with then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo amid sexual harassment allegations, the group tells The Associated Press that Time’s Up is shifting remaining funds to the independently administered Time’s Up Legal Defense Fund, and stopping other operations.

Sibling of deceased brother floored by widow’s actions

DEAR ABBY: My brother passed away. He and my sister-in-law had a good marriage. A month after his funeral, my sister-in-law gave her kids their father’s clothes, instructed them to go through them, keep what they wanted or sell or donate the rest. It has been barely a year. Now she’s redecorating their house—painting, taking down pictures and buying new furniture.

This bothers me greatly. I’m so hurt that everything is being changed. It’s like she’s trying to erase him—all within one year! Should I ask her why everything is being changed and disposed of so soon? And should I feel so hurt about this?

UNSURE HOW TO FEEL

DEAR UNSURE: Your former sister-in-law appears to be more pragmatic than sentimental, and there is nothing wrong with that. She knew her late husband could no longer use his wardrobe, and saw no reason to keep the items hanging in the closet. That she offered his clothes to her children was appropriate. That she is now making changes to the house is not unusual. People are cautioned not to make “important decisions” for about a year after a spouse passes, and your former SIL has wisely refrained.

If you want to ask her why she’s changing things, do so in a non-accusatory way that won’t offend her. I suspect that you are feeling hurt because you are still not ready to accept

that your brother is gone forever. You might find it helpful to talk about it with someone with expertise in the grieving process.

◆◆◆◆

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for nine years. While we were dating, he was kind, considerate and loving. After we married, he turned into a chronic complainer, something he later confessed he had been hiding while we dated.

He talks to me like I’m trash and then gets nice when he wants something. He complains about my grown children, my best friend and even if I leave for work a couple of minutes early. He is a miserable person. I cannot do anything to make him happy. I can’t take this anymore.

He has taken the things away from me that I love—flowers, gardening, pets, books, friends, etc. I’m ready to leave, but he has cancer and I’d feel guilty. He is clear right now, but it will come back.

I don’t want to stay. Life is too short to live this way. He has a great support system with his family. They would take care of him. My health has been affected by him and his terrible attitude. What do I do?

WORN-OUT WIFE

DEAR WIFE: What you do now is consult a lawyer, pack

DEAR ABBY
BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



your bags and leave before he worsens. Do not expect your husband to be grateful for ANY of the efforts you have made on his behalf during the course of your marriage. During the time you were dating, he hid from you the fact that he was a verbal abuser. Now you know he was a fraud. Don’t feel guilty for protecting yourself and reclaiming your life.

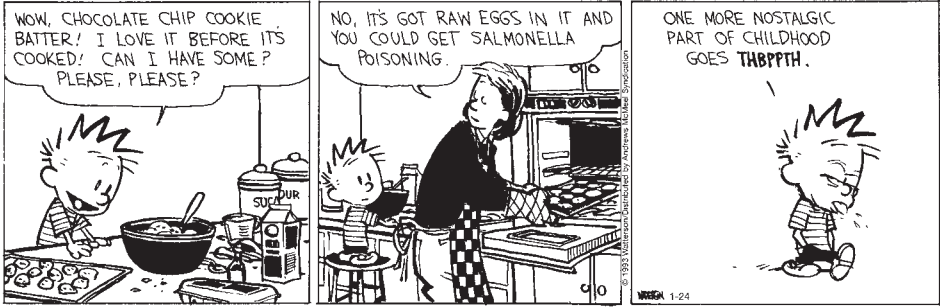
◆◆◆◆

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

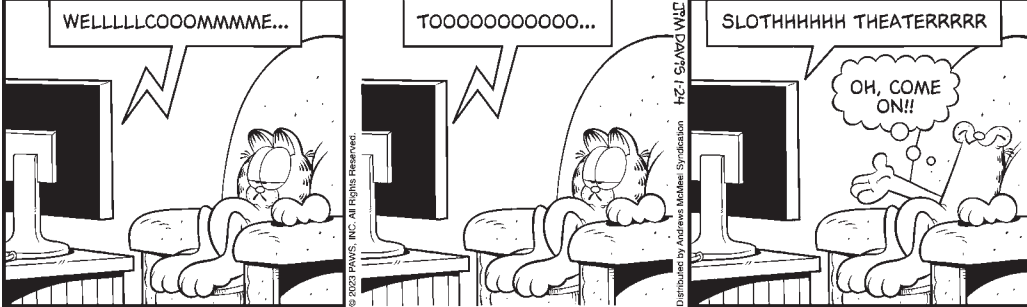
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



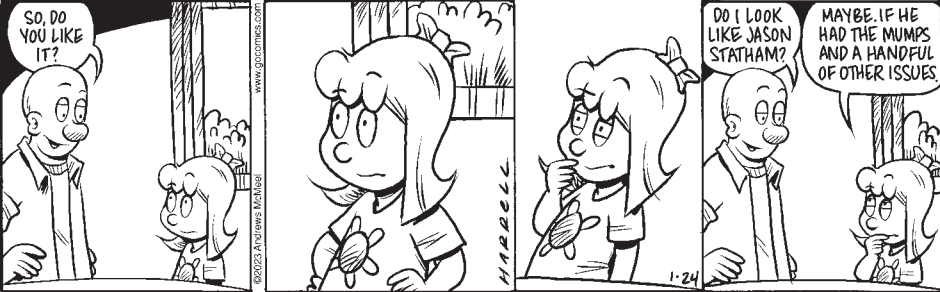
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Methods group

5 TV spots

8 Transcript stats

12 Part of Q.E.D.

13 Roman 52

14 Take five

15 Taj Mahal city

16 Casa-nova

18 Want dearly

20 Like draft beer

21 Chow down

22 Future flower

23 "The Creation" composer

26 Actor Lamas

30 Mimic

31 Church seat

32 Apt rhyme for "spa"

33 Auto shop offerings

36 Musical pace

38 Nay undoer

39 "It's c-c-cold!"

DOWN

40 Gospel

43 Relaxes

47 Like some

49 "Prometheus"

50 Peter Fonda role

51 Busy insect

52 Long lunches?

53 Combo

54 Prof's aides

55 Hardy heroine

1 Prosperity

Solution time: 22 mins.

M	A	C	S	V	I	A	W	I	R	E
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Yesterday's answer 1-24

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mischa Barton, 37; Tatyana Ali, 44; Ed Helms, 49; Neil Diamond, 82.

Happy Birthday: Be open about how you feel, and resolve issues hanging over your head that are holding you back. Progress takes initiative and courage to make tough decisions. It's time to adjust what isn't working for you while you pave the way to new beginnings and happiness. Take command of your life. Choose to simplify how you do things, and practice moderation. Your numbers are 4, 10, 22, 26, 30, 34, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You'll be eager to get things done. Push forward, fulfill your dreams and promote your goals. A challenge will have strings attached. Find out what's expected of you before you proceed. Romance is on the rise. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Sort through emotional issues before you agree to something that may be compromising or uncomfortable. Find out where you stand, and assess where it's best to put your time and effort. Don't forget that charity begins at home. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Gather information and put it to the test. What you discover and how you apply it to your life will inspire others to pitch in and help. Before you accept help, find out what you will owe. Maintaining equality is essential. *****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Stick to the facts, and don't take on the impossible. Reach out to someone you like to work alongside, and you'll get an opportunity to do something that makes a difference. Focus on bringing money in, not spending frivolously. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): An opening will become available. Try something new. A challenge will excite and encourage you to fine-tune your skills to impress someone who can help you get ahead. Choose to be with someone you love, not someone you feel you owe. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A trip, meeting or networking function will be informative. The information you receive will help you adjust to changes heading your way. Don't fret; you'll make substantial gains if you let your work be your calling card. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Dress for success. Pay attention to detail and take better care of your health and well-being. Hone your skills, add to your knowledge and keep up to date with what's trending. Socialize, network or tell someone you love how you feel. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Get approval before you make changes that will affect those you live with. If you are transparent and open regarding your intentions, you'll be granted the go-ahead and offered suggestions that will contribute to your success. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Nothing will be as it appears. Don't act on assumptions; ask questions, explore possibilities and put your energy where it counts. Home improvements will open space to new projects that can inflate your income. If you love someone, share your feelings. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): An active mind will lead to answers that encourage you to follow your heart and head in a direction that favors changes at home that add to your financial stability. Invest more time in improving money management and curbing costly habits. ****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take your intentions and plans for a test drive by reviewing each step required to reach your objective. Your colorful way of pitching your vision will make it difficult for your audience to reject your ideas. A demonstration will seal the deal. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't share sensitive information. Focus on what you can do for others and how to solve a problem that can influence your position or income. Keep the peace, but leave nothing to chance or up to someone else. Do what's best for you. ***

Birthday Baby: You are responsible, eager and passionate. You are fun-loving and unpredictable.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

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47					48			49		
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STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

4				2	5	6		3
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5		9	3	8				1

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/24
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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

7	8	5	4	6	2	1	3	9
2	9	3	7	5	1	8	4	6
1	4	6	3	9	8	5	7	2
4	7	8	5	3	6	9	2	1
3	5	2	1	4	9	6	8	7
6	1	9	2	8	7	3	5	4
5	2	1	6	7	3	4	9	8
8	3	7	9	1	4	2	6	5
9	6	4	8	2	5	7	1	3

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

REMEMBER SKEE-BALL? Solution: 10 letters

O R T E R E M M U S T H G I L
A S T N I O P M A R C A D E A
L A R C Y C A R U C C A U E T
L E V E L H N N R A E L E Y O
E E A T E A M I R B A S K E T
Y L D I N S N N O V I C S S N
E O G G K C I S R C B O L L E
Y H L I L V P D E O H R O L M
T E L I A E J R N T O E P U A
F L N L E G P U I A E D E B N
I E L D T O S S M Z H K T R R
F O R B A L L H O P E C C U U
R O A M D O O W S G N I R I O
P E Z I S T R A D T A R G E T
E C O U P O N S E N I H C A M

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Accuracy, Alley, Angle, Arcade, Ball-hop, Basket, Bonus, Bull's-eye, Carnival, Cheer, Coin, Coupons, Darts, Drop, Fifty, Height, Hole, Incline, Jump, Learn, Level, Lights, Machines, Merchandise, Outdoor, Points, Precise, Prize, Ramp, Retro, Rings, Roll, Score, Size, Skill, Slope, Speed, Summer, Target, Team, Ticket, Toss, Total, Tournament, Value, Wood
Yesterday's Answer: La Selecion
To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 56 through 70, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

49ers beat Cowboys 19-12 to advance to NFC title game



SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)—Christian McCaffrey scored on a go-ahead 2-yard

run in the fourth quarter and San Francisco's defense did the rest, sending the 49ers to their second straight NFC title game with a 19-12 victory over the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday.

The 49ers (15-4) used back-to-back long scoring drives in the second half to wear down the Cowboys (13-6) and win their 12th straight game. San Francisco advanced to play the Eagles in the NFC title game next Sunday in Philadelphia after losing in that round to the Rams a year ago.

"Man, we're just excited that we won," rookie 49ers quarterback Brock Purdy said. "Everyone did their part. It's playoff football, it's never easy, but we're moving on."

The Cowboys lost for the record seventh straight time in the divisional round and have failed to make it to the NFC title game since winning their fifth Super Bowl title following the 1995 season.

Dak Prescott threw two interceptions and Brett Maher missed his fifth extra point of the postseason when his attempt was blocked. He later made two field goals.

The Cowboys had a shot when they took over at their own 18 with 2:59 remaining, trailing 19-12 after Robbie Gould's fourth field goal of the game capped a nearly



San Francisco 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey (23) celebrates after an NFL divisional round playoff football game against the Dallas Cowboys in Santa Clara, Calif., Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023.

eight-minute drive.

But Prescott threw two straight incompletions and was sacked on third down. Coach Mike McCarthy opted to punt on fourth-and-10 with all three timeouts left.

Purdy started the next drive with a 16-yard completion to George Kittle and San Francisco didn't give the ball back to Dallas until there were 45 seconds left. The Cowboys took over at their 6 and never got close from there.

Purdy, the last pick in the draft last April, improved to 7-0 as a starter since replacing an injured Jimmy Garoppolo early in Week 13. He went 18 for 28 for 215 yards with no turnovers against the Cowboys, joining Joe Flacco (2008) and Mark Sanchez (2009) as the only rookie QBs to win two playoff starts.

"Wow. Brock Purdy getting us to the NFC championship game? I mean, he's only won I think like seven in a row now.

Good job, Brock," Kittle said. "He's playing at a high level, getting our best players the football, he's awesome and confident in the huddle. He's just doing a great job."

The 49ers took the lead on the first play of the fourth quarter when McCaffrey capped a 91-yard drive with a 2-yard run.

The drive featured a juggling 30-yard catch by Kittle and a pair of defensive holds against Dallas—including one on Donovan Wilson near the goal line

that negated a third-down sack.

"I was like, you know what, how can I make this as dramatic as possible?" Kittle said of his spectacular catch. "Just shout-out to Brock: I actually wasn't even in progression and he still found me, so that's all that matters. So I just appreciate him giving me a shot at catching the ball."

Maher made his second field goal of the game when he converted from 43 yards out to cut San Francisco's lead to 16-12.

The NFL's top two scoring teams over the past 13 weeks had trouble getting going as the defenses led by All-Pro Nick Bosa of San Francisco and Micah Parsons of Dallas controlled the play.

The Niners picked off Prescott twice in the first half, turned those into field goals by Gould and led 9-6 at the break.

The Cowboys scored the only TD of the first half with Prescott connecting with tight end Dalton Schultz for the third time this postseason. But Maher's low extra-point attempt was blocked by Samson Ebukam.

Maher got some redemption when he made a 25-yard field goal that tied the game at 9 early in the third quarter after Ray-Ray McCloud fumbled a punt return at the San Francisco 21.

JUST FOR KICKS

The Cowboys' decision to stick with Maher after his four missed extra points last week looked questionable when he missed the early extra point. Maher's five missed PATs are the second most by any NFL kicker in the playoffs. Roy Gerela missed six tries in 43 attempts in the 1970s for Houston and Pittsburgh.

There had been a dustup pregame when Maher was warming up. Trent Williams and other 49ers players tried to interfere with his attempts from San Francisco's side of the field, leading to a brief argument.

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP)—Joe Burrow and the Cincinnati Bengals threw a big wrench into the highly anticipated travel plans of the Buffalo Bills, their fans and perhaps even the NFL offices.

Burrow threw two touchdown passes and Cincinnati's defense swarmed Josh Allen on a snow-slicked field in a 27-10 win Sunday to send the Bengals to the AFC championship game for the second straight year.

And it'll be in Kansas City again—instead of in Atlanta, the neutral site where the game would've been played if Buffalo had beaten Cincinnati.

"Better send those refunds," Burrow said, referring to the 50,000 or so tickets already sold for a game that will never be played.

"See y'all in Atlanta," one Bengals player was heard yelling sarcastically while the team made its way to the locker room, where cornerback Eli Apple and a couple of teammates conducted interviews smoking cigars.

The Bengals entered the game already feeling disrespected when the NFL began selling tickets for a would-be game at Atlanta, that was

Bengals return to AFC championship with 27-10 rout of Bills

dependent on the Bills and Chiefs winning this weekend.

The league decided on the first of its kind conference championship neutral site setting because the Bills (13-3) finished the season a half-game behind the Chiefs (14-3) after their game at Cincinnati was canceled on Jan. 2 when Bills safety Damar Hamlin went into cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated on the field.

Hamlin's inspirational presence while watching the game from an end-zone suite was not enough to spark the Bills.

Instead, it was "Joe Cool" showing poise while playing in a persistent snowfall.

Burrow completed his first nine passes for 105 yards as Cincinnati raced to a 14-0 lead after its first two possessions. Ja'Marr Chase opened the scoring with a 28-yard TD catch 3:20 into the game, followed by Burrow's 15-yard TD throw to Hayden Hurst eight minutes later. Joe Mixon scored on a 1-yard run, and Evan McPherson made field goals from 20 and 28 yards in a game the Bengals never trailed.

"The bigger the moment gets, the calmer he gets," Bengals coach Zac Taylor said of Burrow, who improved his playoff record to 5-1. "Our guys believe. They walk on the field ready to attack."

Cincinnati advanced to consecutive AFC championship games for the first time in franchise history and will prepare for a rematch of last year's title game. The Bengals defeated Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs 27-24 to advance to last year's Super Bowl, which they lost to the Los Angeles Rams.

"It's going to be a fun one," said Burrow, who went 23 of 36 for 242 yards Sunday. "Two of the top guys in the league, two of the top teams in the league, great defenses, great overall teams, great coaches."

Cincinnati has won the past three meetings against Kansas City, including a 27-24 victory last month. The Chiefs are making their fifth straight appearance in the AFC championship game following a 27-20 win over Jacksonville on Saturday.

The Bills' playoff run ended in the divisional round for a

second straight season, including a 42-36 overtime loss to Kansas City last year.

Bills receiver Stefon Diggs was so upset, he was spotted leaving the locker room with much of his gear on shortly after the game ended before being coaxed by a teammate to return.

"He's a competitive guy. What makes him good is what you saw," coach Sean McDermott said of Diggs. "It hurts. I wouldn't want a guy that doesn't hurt. We put it all on the line out there and tonight it wasn't good enough."

It was a dud of an outing for the Bills, who opened the season with Super Bowl aspirations, and eventually ran out of emotional and physical gas. Aside from the stunning sight of Hamlin's collapse, the Bills had their schedule twice disrupted by severe winter storms.

Injuries also played an issue. The Bills' pass rush, missing Von Miller since he sustained a season-ending knee injury in November, generated very little pressure against a Bengals offensive line missing three starters due to injuries.

"We were expecting their best punch and they came out and punched us," said Allen, who finished 25 of 42 for 265 yards, and scored on a 1-yard plunge. "We just didn't have it today."

The Bengals mixed in their running attack to keep the Bills off balance in a first half during which Cincinnati outgained Buffalo in total yards by a margin of 274-135, and 412-325 overall. Mixon's 105 yards rushing alone were 1 short of how many the Bengals combined in their past two games, both against Baltimore.

"Domination from start to finish," Burrow added. "That's what we expected. Job's not finished."

The Bengals held one of the NFL's top offenses to season-low 10 points. And the unit got a chance to celebrate by making snow angels in the end zone after Cam Taylor-Britt intercepted Allen's attempt at the goal line to essentially end the game with 62 seconds remaining.

Hamlin was whisked into the stadium in a security vehicle, and led directly into

the Bills' locker room about an hour before kickoff. He was later joined by his mother, Nina, and younger brother, Damir. He watched the game from a suite in one end zone and was pictured on the videoboard at the 2-minute warning in the first half, with Cincinnati facing second-and-goal at Buffalo's 5.

Hamlin raised his arms in his suite to a roar of cheers, before making a heart sign with his hands. The Bills limited the Bengals to a field goal, and trailed 17-7 at the half.

"We'll be back," Hamlin tweeted a few hours after the game. "Don't even trip."

STREAKS AND STATS

The Bengals extended their franchise-best streak to 10 straight wins. They haven't lost since a 32-13 defeat at Cleveland on Halloween. The Bengals' 30 first downs were a franchise postseason record.

They were the most allowed by the Bills since allowing 30 in last year's playoff loss at Kansas City.

The Bills dropped to 13-2 when hosting an NFL playoff game. And they were 4-0 under McDermott.

Thunder snap Nuggets' nine-game win streak, 101-99

DENVER (AP)—Shai Gilgeous-Alexander banked in a decisive 8-foot jumper with 9.2 seconds remaining and finished with 34 points as the Oklahoma City Thunder snapped Denver's league-leading nine-game win streak and beat the Nuggets 101-99 Sunday night.

After Denver's Zeke Nnaji hit two free throws to tie the game at 99 with 30 seconds left, Gilgeous-Alexander got the ball out of a timeout and hit the mid-range jumper to give the Thunder the lead. The Nuggets' Jamal Murray missed a 14-foot shot in the final seconds.

Oklahoma City's victory ended the Nuggets' 16-game home win streak—the franchise's longest run in 10 years.

Josh Giddey had 18 points and a team-high nine rebounds for the Thunder, who earned their seventh win in nine games.

Denver was without center Nikola Jokic, who missed his second straight game while dealing with tightness in his left hamstring, and forward Michael Porter Jr., out due to personal reasons. Jamal Murray shouldered much of the offensive load, finishing with a team-high 26 points and nine assists.

Suns 112, Grizzlies 110

In Phoenix, Chris Paul had 22 points and 11 assists in his return after missing seven games with a hip injury, leading Phoenix over Memphis.

The Suns had to hold on in the final minutes after dominating most of the night.

Desmond Bane's free throws cut the margin to 110-106 with 58.8 seconds left. After a Phoenix turnover, Ja Morant was fouled and made two more free throws to cut it to 110-108 with 28.6 seconds remaining. Phoenix forward Dario Saric hit two free throws after being fouled on the ensuing possession and the Grizzlies finally ran out of time.

The Suns have won three straight, pushing back to .500 for the season. The Grizzlies have dropped two in a row after their 11-game winning streak was snapped by the Lakers on Friday.

Mikal Bridges led the Suns with 24 points, while Torrey Craig added a season high 20. Morant scored 27 for the Grizzlies, while Desmond Bane added 24.

Lakers 121, Trail Blazers 112

In Portland, Ore., LeBron James had 37 points and 11 rebounds, and Los Angeles rallied in the second half to beat Portland.

Thomas Bryant added 31 points and 14 rebounds for the Lakers, who have won three of their last four after a three-game losing streak.

Anfernee Simons had 31 points for the Blazers, who have lost three straight. Damian Lillard added 24 points and 10 assists.

James was questionable going into the game with a sore ankle but played. James is closing in on Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's NBA scoring record of 38,387 points. James is 233 points away from matching the record after Sunday's game.



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, right, drives past Denver Nuggets guard Jamal Murray in the second half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023, in Denver.

ing into the game with a sore ankle but played. James is closing in on Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's NBA scoring record of 38,387 points. James is 233 points away from matching the record after Sunday's game.

Nets 120, Warriors 116

In San Francisco, Royce O'Neale hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 28.5 seconds left, and Brooklyn capitalized on Golden State's third straight game squandering a double-digit lead.

Kyrie Irving finished with 38 points, nine assists and seven rebounds for a Nets team that won a second straight playing without injured star

Kevin Durant, who missed facing his former team after winning titles and NBA Finals MVP honors in 2017 and '18 with Golden State.

Nic Claxton contributed career highs of 24 points and 15 rebounds as the Nets won two in a row following a four-game losing streak.

Stephen Curry had 26 points, seven assists and six rebounds and Jordan Poole added 17 points for the Warriors.

Heat 100, Pelicans 96

In Miami, Tyler Herro scored 26 points, Kyle Lowry had nine straight for Miami in the final moments and the Heat rallied to beat New Orleans.

Bam Adebayo and Jimmy Butler each scored 18 for Miami, which trailed by 16 in the first half. Lowry scored 17 for the Heat, the last nine of those coming in a span of 1:42 down the stretch.

Trey Murphy III had 17 for New Orleans, which got 14 points and 16 rebounds from Jonas Valanciunas. CJ McCollum scored 13 and Larry Nance Jr. added 12 for the Pelicans.

New Orleans' 25th turnover came on a five-second violation with 15.1 seconds left, with the Heat up by two. The Heat needed two time-outs before they could get the ball in bounds, and wound up losing a jump ball anyway with 12.2

seconds remaining.

McCollum got a good look at a 3-pointer on the ensuing possession, but it rimmed out and Miami's Victor Oladipo put the game away with two free throws.

Clippers 112, Mavericks 98

In Dallas, Kawhi Leonard scored a game-high 30 points, Paul George had 21 and Norman Powell added 19 off the bench to lead Los Angeles past Dallas.

Luka Doncic led the Mavericks with 29 points and 10 rebounds. Tim Hardaway Jr. added 22 points and Spencer Dinwiddie had 21.

The Clippers won consecutive games for the first time since Dec. 26-27, while the Mavericks have lost four of their last five games and seven of 10.

Raptors 125, Knicks 116

In Toronto, Fred VanVleet scored 28 points, Gary Trent Jr. had 24 before fouling out and Toronto beat New York to end a three-game losing streak.

Pascal Siakam scored 24 points, Scottie Barnes had 19 and Precious Achiuwa added 12 points and 11 rebounds for the Raptors, who scored 26 points off 17 New York turnovers.

RJ Barrett scored 30 points and Julius Randle had 23 points and 19 rebounds as the Knicks lost their fourth straight. Jalen Brunson scored 21 points and Obi Toppin had 14.

Swiatek, Gauff lose at Australian Open; Korda in 1st Slam QF



MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — It all came so

seemingly easy for Iga Swiatek last season—two Grand Slam trophies, eight titles overall, a 37-match winning streak, a lengthy stay at No. 1 in the rankings.

Those accomplishments made everyone else expect constant greatness from Swiatek, which she can't do anything about. They also changed the way she approached big moments, and a 6-4, 6-4 loss to Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina in the Australian Open's fourth round Sunday made Swiatek wonder whether she needs to reassess her outlook.

"I felt like I took a step back in terms of how I approach these tournaments, and I maybe wanted it a little bit too hard. So I'm going to try to chill out a little bit more," Swiatek said. "I felt the pressure, and I felt that 'I don't want to lose' instead of 'I want to win.'"

So there will not be a show-

down between Swiatek and No. 7 seed Coco Gauff in the quarterfinals at Melbourne Park. Instead, it will be Rybakina taking on 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko, a 7-5, 6-3 winner against Gauff, with a semifinal berth at stake.

"I kept her under so much pressure," Ostapenko said.

Add Swiatek's loss to Week 1 exits by Ons Jabeur, Rafael Nadal and Casper Ruud, and this Australian Open marks the first Grand Slam tournament in the Open era—which began in 1968—with the top two women's seeds and top two men's seeds all gone before the quarterfinals.

In other women's action Sunday, No. 3 Jessica Pegula got to the quarterfinals in Australia for the third year in a row by defeating 2021 French Open champion Barbora Krejickova 7-5, 6-2. Pegula now plays 2012-13 Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka, who returned to the final eight at Melbourne Park for the first time since 2016 by grabbing the last three games of a 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over 87th-ranked Zhu Lin that ended

at nearly 2:20 a.m. on Monday.

Both the 22nd-seeded Rybakina, a 23-year-old who represents Kazakhstan, and the 17th-seeded Ostapenko, a 25-year-old from Latvia, made it this far in Melbourne for the first time.

"There was moments in the match where I was getting frustrated, because I normally can problem-solve, but today I feel like I didn't have much answers to what she was doing," said Gauff, an 18-year-old from Florida who was the runner-up to Swiatek at the French Open last June.

"There was balls I was hitting deep, and she was hitting them on the line and hitting them back deep, over and over again," said Gauff, who wiped away tears during her news conference. "It's just one of those days that just didn't go my way and went her way."

One key: Ostapenko went 3-for-3 converting her break chances, and Gauff was just 1-for-8 in such situations.

Rybakina, meanwhile, used her big serve to produce a half-dozen aces, part of an over-

all 24-15 edge in total winners against Swiatek.

In men's results, 22-year-old American Sebastian Korda—whose father, Petr, won the 1998 Australian Open—reached his first Grand Slam quarterfinal by edging No. 10 Hubert Hurkacz 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 1-6, 7-6 (10-7), unseeded Jiri Lehecka upset No. 6 Felix Auger-Aliassime 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (2), 7-6 (3), and No. 18 Karen Khachanov eased past No. 31 Yoshihito Nishioka 6-0, 6-0, 7-6 (4).

Korda will meet Khachanov now, while Lehecka takes on No. 3 Stefanos Tsitsipas, who outlasted No. 15 Jannik Sinner 6-4, 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 6-3 on Sunday night. Lehecka was 0-4 in Grand Slam matches until this tournament, while Tsitsipas was the runner-up at the 2021 French Open and is a three-time semifinalist at Melbourne Park.

Until Sunday, both Swiatek and Gauff looked fairly dominant for a week, winning every set they contested. Swiatek dropped a total of just 15 games, Gauff just 19, through three matches.

"For sure, when you play

against No. 1, I think you have really nothing to lose. I knew that I had to be aggressive from the first ball because she's a great mover, and she defends really well," Rybakina said. "So I was trying to just attack her from the first ball, and it really worked well."

Her ranking of No. 25 does not properly reflect her ability or results because her championship at the All England Club in July did not come with any ranking points. The WTA and ATP tours withheld all points at Wimbledon in 2022 after the All England Club barred players from Russia and Belarus from participating because of the invasion of Ukraine.

Rybakina—who was born in Moscow but has played for Kazakhstan since 2018, when that country offered her funding to support her tennis career—said her current standing "doesn't bother me, because it's been already six months," yet also acknowledged it does provide some motivation.

Despite her status as a major champion, Rybakina has been out of the spotlight: Her first-round match at Melbourne Park was placed on tiny Court 13

last Monday; her match against two-time Slam champ Garbiñe Muguruza at least year's U.S. Open was on Court 4.

But her game is worthy of much more attention, as she displayed in knocking out Swiatek, one match after defeating 2022 Australian Open runner-up Danielle Collins.

Swiatek was not at her best, and Rybakina had a lot to do with that. In the opening game, Swiatek led 40-love but got broken. In the next, Swiatek held two break points at 15-40 but failed to convert either. So early on, while it ended up being 2-2, it very well could have been 4-0 in Swiatek's favor, and she termed that sequence "a little bit disturbing."

Rybakina wound up serving out that set at love, capping it with a 113 mph (183 kph) ace, and her dangerous backhand was quite a help, too: She produced six winners off that wing in the first set, compared with zero for Swiatek.

In the second set, Swiatek appeared to have gotten herself back on track, going up 3-0. But that surge didn't last long, and Rybakina took six of the match's last seven games.

By **LEIGH GASES**
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REPORTER



In celebration of Women's Month in the Marianas and International Women's Day 2023, the Northern Marianas Athletics 3rd Annual Women's 10K Run 2023 is set for Saturday, March 11, 2023.

The course will run through the Saipan Marathon Course along the Beach Road Pathway.

What's different this year is more inclusiveness with the community, which, with all women invited to join, men are also invited to the new mixed female/male 5K Fun Run/Walk, along with a new distance of a women's only 5K.

For males, according to Robin Sapong, NMA secretary general, "they will be allowed to join in 5K mix fun run/walk but must use a PRAM/Stroller to run or walk, strictly for fun and support but not as competitors."

Finisher medals will be given to participants of the 10K

3rd Annual Women's 10K Run on March 11



Women competitors of the 2nd Annual Women's 10K race last year pose for a photo.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

run and the age divisions are U18 to 65 and older.

The OneTime chip timing system will be used for this event.

"With the assistance of our partners once again, we will use the Onetime chip timing system for results, in which we were able to purchase two

race mats with the support of World Athletics. We will also seek Run Saipan support to utilize their shoe tags to reduce impact on our environment as it can be reset and reused for a span of two years," he said. "With a local timing team, it gives us an opportunity to train new people and provide

opportunities for them to learn new skills."

In an effort to go green and reduce negative impact on the environment from travel, Sapong said that by using OneTime, it has reduced their carbon footprint by saving an estimate of 2.7 tonnes of CO2e by not flying in a timer for the event, which is "a huge win for our partners and us," said Sapong.

As for what he expects the turnout to be this year, Sapong said "For the past two years, in-person events we have had

over 100 participants. So for sure, we're expecting a bigger turnout this year."

"We hope to retain some of our previous sponsors and donors for the past two years. We also welcome volunteers, donors and sponsors for this year's edition. As a non-profit organization we are very thankful for the members of the community for supporting our events," said Sapong.

Dr. Lily Muldoon, medical director of the Division of Public Health at the Common-

wealth Healthcare Corp., won gold in both the inaugural and 2nd Annual NMI Women's 10K Run. In the first year, she crossed the finish line with a time of 43:42 and in the second year, crossed it at 43:49. Second to her in the 2022 race was Akiko Miller with 45:03 and Dixie Mendenhall with 48:33 finishing third.

For more information and to sign up for the event, go to <https://raceroster.com/events/2023/69846/nmi-10km-womens-run/>.

KOBLERVILLE

From Page 20

Naraja with 1:04 remaining.

However, it was too little too late as Koblerville wasted the remaining time to hoist the boys 18 championship trophy.

Atan led all scorers with 32 points with big man Tynk Basa adding 9 points for Koblerville, while Naraja paced the runner-up Gualo Rai squad with 19 markers with Craig Padayao and Elijay Garcia adding 15 and 13, respectively.

Basa attributed their championship in the boys 18 division to good old-fashioned defense.

"As always, we always inform our boys that defense is key! We know we can score, we just need to ensure that we don't let the other team score more than us. If we do that, we win every time."

Plus, he admitted Kobler-

ville had a great walk-through the day prior.

"We had a good day of practice on Saturday. We worked on moving the ball more and moving our feet on defense. Gualo Rai has good guards and taking away the penetration was key for us."

And in that halftime speech, Basa said he reiterated to his players what needed to be done to eke out the victory and the all-important championship.

"At half time, I told them that defense is going to get us the W! Before they took the floor, I told them to go take the championship because they weren't just going to give it to us. They started the second half with great intensity on defense and were able to turn defense into offense with transition baskets."

Both teams actually finished the regular season with identical 6-1 win-loss records, but Koblerville beat Gualo Rai

in the final game of the eliminations to take the top seed.

"We'd like to dedicate it to our sponsor, Saipan Vegas. We thank them for providing our kids the opportunity to learn and grow as individuals through the game of basketball. The boys have really built a great bond with one another," said Basa.

In the battle for third in the same division played last Saturday, Tanapag beat Dandan, 69-60.

The championship games of the boys 13 and women's division as well as the third place games for both divisions will be published in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

Koblerville 68 – Atan 32, Basa 9, Mateo 6, Lucas 5, Fiden 5, Joab 4.

Gualo Rai 57 – Naraja 19, Padayao 15, Garcia 13, Aldan 7, Pangelinan 3, Sasamoto 1.

Scoring by halves: 29-27, 68-57.

cial meet as possible. I think young swimmers can experience the tension of the race and learn the rules."

Kimura believes meets—unofficial or not—are the best training ground for young swimmers to develop discipline and experience to prepare them for future off-island competition.

"Importantly, as long as it's a competition, there are rules. We need to make swimmers understand the reality that if they don't follow the rules, they will be disqualified even if they swim. Swimming rules are quite detailed and strict. If we don't teach it to the new

generation, we won't be able to go to any international competition. We hope 2023 is the year when a lot of kids' dreams come true," he said.

Tsunami Saipan's up-and-coming swimmers share Kimura's enthusiasm that they will finally be able to spread their wings beyond the CNMI this year.

"I will be very happy if my coach selects me, but nervous at the same time. I will be very proud to represent my club. I would love to go to Guam or other countries. It would be nice to swim with other kids that I don't know. It would make me happy to compete and will make me know how

much I improved in my swimming skills," said Gwen Retardo, Tsunami Saipan's top 8-and-under girls swimmer who goes to Grace Christian Academy.

Tsunami Saipan's top 8-and-under boys swimmer Leo Li of Garapan Elementary School is as excited as Retardo.

"I'm happy to be a member of the team. I want to see other places in the world and I keep swimming because I love swimming," he said.

Catalina Frink, the club's best 10-and-under girls swimmer and top ranked in the butterfly and backstroke events, said it will be a privilege to don the CNMI colors in off-

island meets.

"I will be shocked and really happy that if ever I'll be chosen to represent the CNMI in an off-island meet. Going to another country is a really big achievement. Swimming is my favorite sport. I have been swimming since I was 6. It taught me to be tough, brave, and hardworking," said the GCA student.

Sera Guerrero, a student from Mt. Carmel School and is a top ranked 9-and-under swimmer, said she will definitely make sure to make her home islands proud if ever she goes off to compete off-island.

"I'm so excited but also

they swept all but one event for a score of 12-3.

The MHS boys roster include Marlon Bautista, Jan Dumagan, Brandon Manacop, and Paulo Quidato. The girls consist of Seiyul Hong, Zhimin Jin, Vianca Mangulabnan, Enmei Quan, and Angieleysa Punzalan.

After defeating their foes, the Torchbearers and Dolphins garnered a total score of 27 points each and are both on top of the bracket one leaderboard.

Behind them are the 2021-2022 co-ed high school badminton defending champions, Saipan International School, with a total score of 15 points after beating GCA team 2, 8-7, and defeating SSHS team 2, 7-5.

Fourth in the standings is GCA team 2 with a total of 7 points after losing to SIS and not being able to play a second game after a power outage at the gym.

SSHS team 2 is in fifth place with 5 points and Tinian is at the bottom of the standings with 0.

Results of bracket two games will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

The schedule for the next round-robin games are this Saturday, Jan. 28, then on Saturday, Feb. 25.

The Top 2 of bracket one and bracket two round-robin semifinal games are scheduled for Saturday, March 4, while the championship game is scheduled for Saturday, March 11.

TSUNAMI

From Page 20

CNMI. Lack of experience leads to a huge problem for young swimmers," he said.

Locally, Tsunami Saipan is looking to prepare the next generation of CNMI swimmers by holding competitions and with that in mind, Kimura said the club will hold unofficial meets with a lot more frequency this year.

"Tsunami Saipan has a plan to hold the unofficial swim meet monthly this year. It is so far from an official meet, but we will try to hold it as close to an off-

nervous if I will be able to participate in an off-island meet. I do want to compete and make Tsunami Saipan proud. Swimming is very fun, keeps me strong, and healthy but also challenging," she said.

Aileen Kim, who is pound for pound the strongest swimmer of her age group, said she can't wait to compete in an off-island meet like her contemporaries.

"I will be nervous if I go to a Guam meet because that means I am a representative of the CNMI. But I will feel very good and be proud of myself. Swimming makes me healthy and gives me more confidence," she said.



49ers beat Cowboys
19-12 to advance to
NFC title game

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Saipan Tribune Sports

3rd Annual
Women's 10K Run
on March 11

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Koblerville crowned boys 18 champs

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Koblerville won the championship of the boys 18 division of the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League after beating an off-target Gualo Rai team, 68-57, last Sunday night at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center.

The game was a close one in the first half as Koblerville's Airston Atan and Gualo Rai's Leo Naraja were engaged in a shooting match.

Atan fired 14 points in the opening 20 minutes of action, while Naraja was good for 10 of his own as Gualo Rai kept it close, 29-27.

Thanks to some halftime pep talk from coach Preston Basa, Koblerville started the second half like a house on fire, igniting a 9-0 run in the first nine minutes of the period spurred by good ball movement to open up a 38-27 spread.

The scoring drought continued for Gualo Rai as Naraja suddenly was firing blanks and the rest of his teammates weren't much help either.

Meanwhile, Atan added 18 more points in the second half and had more support from his teammates and at one point Koblerville led by as much as 20 points, 59-39, with 8 minutes to go in the contest.

Gualo Rai rallied in the final couple of minutes of the championship and cut it down to 9 points, 63-54, on a triple by

See **KOBLERVILLE**
on **Page 19**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Koblerville guard Airston Atan goes up against Gualo Rai's Lucio Aldan and Elijah Garcia while Leo Naraja looks on in their boys 18 championship game in the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League last Sunday night at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center.

Tsunami Saipan young'uns pining for off-island meets



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center young swimmers pose for a group photo. Front row from left: Andrea Ryu, Juwon Park, Xing Yu Wang, Dylan Chen, Yubo Lin, and Taewon Park. Middle row from left: Ye Suh Lee, Fiona Yu, Leo Li, Gwen Retardo, Aileen Kim, and Yoon Min Cho. Third row from left: Simon Shindo, Xing Chen Wang, Sera Guerrero, Yun Suh Lee, Catalina Frink, and Hao Yang Song.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tsunami Like their older counterparts, Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center younger members are also eager to represent the CNMI in off-island competitions.

With that in mind, Tsunami Saipan coach Hiroyuki Kimura has embarked on the Dream Kids Project 2023 to make this happen.

"I'm very proud of them because they keep working hard to practice swimming even if they can't swim in any official meet for a long time," he said alluding to the club's 11-and-under swimmers.

The many-time CNMI national swimming coach hopes that 2023 will be the year that all Tsunami Saipan swimmers, including the young ones, will finally experience competition outside of Saipan.

"Many countries in the world are finally opening and we have opportunities to participate in other off-island swim meets. The priority is experience for our next generation of swimmers in the

See **TSUNAMI** on **Page 19**

ACS 1, MHS 2 rocket through Day 1 of co-ed HS badminton

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Agape Christian School Torchbearers and Marianas High School Dolphins rocketed their way through the competition of bracket one in the first day of round-robin games in the co-ed high school Public School System/TakeCare Badminton Interscholastic League

held at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Friday.

The ACS Torchbearers were on fire as they brought Tinian High School to their knees in an almost complete sweep of all five events.

The Torchbearers won all three games of the boys

See **ACS** on **Page 19**



LEIGH GASES
Caleb Cui, right, leaps high while Aaron Zheng gets ready during their game in the co-ed high school Public School System/TakeCare Badminton Interscholastic League last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.